

UC San Diego Announces Wide-Ranging Plans to Cover H1N1 Flu Contingencies

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Pat JaCoby

Preparations are in place at UC San Diego in anticipation of a possible surge in numbers of H1N1 flu cases as more than 28,000 students return to campus Sept. 21.

Plans to handle prevention and/or treatment of the new influenza virus have been underway since spring at various locations, ranging from the Early Childhood Education Center and its toddlers, to the Medical Center and its staff and patients, to the Preuss School and its teen-age students.

But those most likely to be affected, as evidenced by mounting cases on college campuses throughout the nation, are students who share close quarters in residence halls and classrooms. To provide timely information to students, parents, families, faculty and staff, a new UC San Diego web site containing H1N1 information has been established at <http://ucsd.edu/flu>.

"We've had five to 10 students visit Student Health Services with flu-like illness each week all summer, but it's very likely that the number will increase rapidly when students return," said Regina Fleming-Magit, M.D., MPH, director of Student Health Services. "We've anticipated a surge in illness and have a number of practices in place that we hope will protect students from becoming sick, and to care for them if they do become ill."

The overarching message, Fleming said, is that "if you have a fever and other flu symptoms, go home, and stay home." H1N1 flu symptoms include temperature over 100 degrees, cough, sore throat and stuffy nose. Additionally, there may be muscle aches, chills, headache, and/or an upset digestive system. "Home," Fleming said, "could be your residence hall, your apartment, or your parents' home."

Fleming advises that people with flu-like symptoms remain home until 24 hours after their fever subsides, without the use of fever-reducing medicines."

Among measures instituted by Student Health Services for incoming students:

Informational fliers about the H1N1 flu will be distributed by Resident Advisors and left on all beds of students as they move into residence halls.

Flu kits will be available for \$5 at Student Health and other sites throughout campus. The kits contain a thermometer, acetaminophen, cough suppressant, sore throat lozenges, hand sanitizer and tissues.

A "flu buddy" system will be coordinated by Health Education/Student Health Advocates to assist ill students by providing meals, flu kits and check-in. Students can request a volunteer buddy at flubuddy@ucsd.edu.

Seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccines (nasal spray and shots) will be available at Student Health Services and other off-site mini-clinics in residence halls, RIMAC and the Price Center. The seasonal flu vaccines, recommended especially for high-risk persons, are available now; the H1N1 vaccine is expected to be available by the end of October.

Student Wellness and Student Health Services are sponsoring a contest for the best student-created video with a flu prevention message. "We have the most creative students here," Fleming said, "so we wanted to

encourage them to help get the word out." Prizes of \$300, first; \$150, second and \$75, third, are being offered. (See details on Student Wellness web site.)

Same day appointments will be available at Student Health Services for students with symptoms of upper respiratory infection; students with severe symptoms can be seen in Urgent Care.

The basic prevention strategy for meeting this H1N1 challenge, Fleming said, "is to be really, really diligent about hand washing. Don't touch your face. Cover a cough by coughing into your elbow. Get plenty of sleep."

Media Contact: Pat JaCoby, 858-534-7404 or pjacoby@ucsd.edu