

Preparing you and the College

H1N1

What is H1N1 (Swine Flu)?

(H1N1) is a new viral infection that has evolved from human, swine, and avian influenza viruses. Symptoms in people are similar to seasonal flu and include **fever (100° or higher), body aches, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, and, occasionally, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.**

How does swine flu spread?

Influenza is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person through the coughing or sneezing of the infected person. A person may become infected by touching something with the flu viruses on it and then touching his/her mouth, eyes or nose.

Where do things stand now?

The CDC is not currently recommending that institutions cancel or dismiss classes or other large gatherings. However, we do anticipate that this fall will bring an increase in the number of people contracting this virus. We have had at least one confirmed case of an employee with the virus, and we anticipate that additional students and employees will contract the virus this fall.

What is the College doing to be prepared?

Should we have an outbreak of H1N1, Messiah College is prepared, and we are monitoring the situation carefully. We have prepared a series of protocols that will allow the College to adjust to various scenarios depending on the impact of the flu, such as a protocol for social distancing if necessary. We will communicate more specifics if it becomes necessary to implement such a protocol. Likewise, we are actively distributing information regarding precautionary measures for students and employees.

What should I do to be prepared?

First, you need to do everything you can to avoid contracting the virus. **We strongly recommend that all students and employees get vaccinated for both the regular flu and H1N1.** Another important measure is to wash your hands very frequently. Additional guidelines for avoiding/managing illness in your home should you or someone else become sick are available on the College's website and the CDC website (see below).

Secondly, you need to have a plan in the event you did get sick. For example, speak with your department chair/supervisor before-hand so that you are prepared for coverage in the event of illness. Plan for back-up child care and identify sources of help in advance. Maintain supplies such as thermometers, tissues, cold/flu medications, hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes.

Where Do I Find More Info?

There is a tremendous amount of information related to flu and specifically H1N1 available through the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The website is <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>. The College will post information specific to our own programs via our website at http://www.messiah.edu/offices/engle_center/.