

H1N1 VIRUS

Health and Safety Abroad

The health and safety of our students is our highest priority. Global College has closely followed efforts by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to better understand as well as combat the spread of the virus. We are writing today to offer additional factual information on the H1N1 virus, and to discuss aspects of the situation as related to your time abroad. The following information and recommendations are adapted from the US Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov> and Long Island University's Health Services Department.

What is novel H1N1?

Novel H1N1 (formerly know as swine flu) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. The virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. The WHO currently classifies the H1N1 pandemic as moderate, causing mild illness in most people.

What should I do if I get sick?

If you are studying in an area where people have been identified with novel H1N1 flu and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people. Staying at home means that you should not leave your home except to seek medical care. This means avoiding normal activities, including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Practice good hygiene (see below).
2. Have a thermometer, fever/pain reliever (acetaminophen, ibuprofen), tissues, "no touch" wastebasket or trash can and liners, antimicrobial wipes and hand sanitizer on hand at your accommodation.
3. Carry tissues and hand sanitizer or wipes in your bag or backpack.
4. Know the signs and symptoms of the flu and influenza-like illness (ILI):
 1. Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or chills and cough or sore throat.
 2. Possible signs of fever: feeling warm, being flushed, sweating, shivering.
 3. Flu may also cause runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.

4. In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath; pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen; sudden dizziness; confusion; severe or persistent vomiting; and flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.
5. If you develop influenza or influenza-like illness, you must stay away from public activities until you have been symptom-free, including fever (off fever-reducing medicine) for 24 hours. It is highly advised that you seek professional medical advice as soon as possible. Keep in contact center staff and familiarize yourself with local clinics and hospitals.

GOOD HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRACTICE

1. Avoid close contact with those who are or may be sick.
2. Stay home when you are sick.
3. Practice good respiratory etiquette:
 1. Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing.
 2. Dispose of tissues in a waste receptacle (don't touch the trash).
 3. Clean your hands.
 4. Do this every time you cough or sneeze!
4. Clean your hands often and appropriately:
 1. Wash with soap and water for 20 seconds.
 2. Dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
 3. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.
 4. Wipe shared surfaces and items with disinfectant cleaners.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, as this transfers germs.
6. Practice other good health habits:
 1. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active.
 2. Stay well-hydrated, eat nutritious foods.
 3. Manage your stress; stay connected with friends and family.

In addition to following these recommendations, it is also highly advised that students remain informed about the situation. The following websites may be useful.

<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/notices.aspx>

<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/updates/en/>

<http://www.flu.gov/>

<http://www.nafsa.org>