

FLU IN MAINE

At its worst, flu can be deadly. In its milder forms, flu can lead to missed work or school. We hope the information in this fact sheet will help you prevent the flu and cope with this illness if you get it.



Information provided by ME CDC

The flu can be deadly:

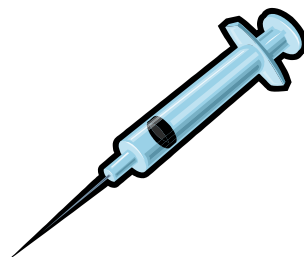
Every year more than 35,000 people in the United States die from the flu. Thousands more die from infections (like pneumonia) that may go along with the flu. Outbreaks may disrupt families, schools, businesses, and religious and social organizations.

What can we do to prevent the flu:

- Get a flu shot—flu vaccines work!
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizers
- Cover your cough—cough or sneeze into your elbow
- Keep your fingers out of your mouth
- Avoid crowds during flu outbreaks
- Encourage co-workers to stay home when sick
- Use caution when caring for those who are ill—wash your hands often
- Act healthy—exercise and eat

Caring for someone with the flu/ILI:

- Protect yourself with a flu shot
- Minimize contact with other flu patients; try to stay at least 3 feet away
- “Isolate” the patient until symptom-free (no fever without taking fever-reducing meds) for 24 hours.
- Change bed linens and towels frequently (wash linens and hands immediately)
- Clean sickroom surfaces frequently
- Monitor your patient’s temperature and condition



What to do if the flu strikes:

- Stay home and avoid contact with others—avoid work, school, and social gatherings
- Stay in bed
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue—avoid infecting caregivers
- Drink plenty of fluids such as water and sports drinks
- Use over-the-counter flu medications
- Monitor your illness—if the symptoms do not improve, visit your doctor
- Help to lessen the impact of the flu. Be vigilant for possible signs of illness in other family members. If you or others close to you become ill, play it safe: **stay home!**

How to know if you have the flu:

Signs of the flu are:

- Fever greater than 101 degrees. Colds do not come with fevers.
- Ill feeling—people with the flu feel sick and often very tired.
- Sore throat and cough—maybe other respiratory symptoms
- The flu lasts 1—2 weeks. Colds often last less than a week.

Stay informed about H1N1 in Maine

www.mainepublichealth.gov

www.maineflu.gov

Facebook (search for “Maine CDC”)

Twitter (<http://twitter.com/MEPublicHealth>)

Maine CDC’s blog (<http://mainepublichealth.blogspot.com>)

U.S. CDC H1N1: <http://www.cdc.gov.h1n1flu/>

U.S. DHHS : <http://www.flu.gov>

UMS H1N1 Information

(For UMFk info see www.umfk.maine.edu/emergency)

Influenza Like Illness (ILI) - Fever over 100 degrees plus coughing or sneezing

* Since laboratory testing for influenza may be delayed, anyone with ILI should be presumed to have the flu.

H1N1 Risk Groups

Unlike regular seasonal flu, H1N1 is much more prevalent in younger people. The CDC has identified the following risk groups in order of priority:

1. Pregnant women
2. Caregivers and household contacts of infants less than 6 months old.
3. Children and young adults age 6 months to 25 years.
4. **People ages 25 through 64 who have health conditions** associated with a higher risk of medical complications from the flu, including those with asthma, COPD, diabetes, chronic cardiovascular disease, and people with compromised immune systems.
5. Health care workers
6. EMS workers
7. Otherwise healthy adults



Planning is underway for seasonal and H1N1 influenza vaccination clinics on all UMS campuses. Specific information will be publicized as information becomes available.

For Supervisors -

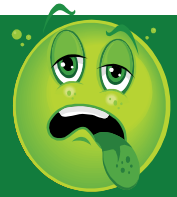
- Have and communicate your department's contingency plan for staffing, operations and employee time approval (H1N1 absenteeism may reach 35%).
- Encourage ill employees to go home immediately and stay home until 24 hours post fever.
- Assist absent employees with time entry if necessary.
- Discuss telecommuting or other staffing issues with HR as soon as possible.

Protect yourself! Clean surfaces such as light switches, doorknobs, keyboards, countertops, etc. periodically with any commonly available anti-bacterial cleanser.

How does the virus spread?

The virus lives in warm, moist conditions and is spread by:

1. droplets from sneezes and coughs
2. Hand-to-face contact (the virus can live on your hands for 3—8 hours and 2—4 hours on hard surfaces)



Tips for care givers and parents:

- Teach and practice good respiratory hygiene (cover your coughs and sneezes with elbow or tissue) and washing of hands frequently.
- Talk to your dependent care provider and/or school about ILI policies.
- Plan ahead for possible alternative or back-up dependant care arrangements.

UMS Leave Policies—When an Employee or Family Member is Sick:

Employees should stay home if they have flu symptoms or need to care for a family member with the flu. Disability leave provisions vary by bargaining unit and employee group. Please see the appropriate agreement or handbook at www.maine.edu/system/lr/labor_relations.php for specific information. For general planning:

- Hourly employees— May use up to 1/2 of total accumulated sick/disability leave to care for an ill family member.
- Salaried employees, except faculty—May use 20 days of accumulated sick/disability leave per fiscal year to care for family member(s).
- Faculty—May use up to 30 days of accumulated sick/disability leave per fiscal year to care for family member(s).

Employees who do not have enough accrued sick leave to cover their absence may use accrued annual leave and compensatory time (if applicable). Employees who have exhausted all accrued leave may request an advance of sick leave from their supervisor or Human Resources

Telecommuting may be an option under certain circumstances. Speak with your supervisor and then HR prior to performing work from home.

For all employees—Report absence to your supervisor as soon as possible. Absences due to illness of more than 10 days require the submission of Family Medical Leave request. Information and forms are available online at www.maine.edu/system/hr/fmlapol.php or from HR.