

Frequently Asked Questions

Flu-like illness

What are symptoms of seasonal flu and H1N1 flu?

- Fever (greater than 100°F)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue

Do you test for H1N1?

Following CDC and state guidelines, **UHCS does not test for H1N1**. The H1N1 test is performed only at the state laboratory and is expected only to be used for people who require hospitalization.

If you become ill and experience any of the following **high-risk symptoms**, seek medical care immediately:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Fever & shaking chills
- Unable to keep fluids down
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Irritable
- Chest pain
- Rash
- Neck stiffness
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

Should I go to see a medical clinician if I have flu-like symptoms?

YES

If you have any of the following medical conditions:

- Immunosuppression
- Pregnant
- Asthma or chronic pulmonary disease (e.g. cystic fibrosis)
- Cardiovascular disease (e.g. congenital heart disease)
- Chronic renal or hepatic disease (dialysis)
- Neuromuscular disorders (cerebral palsy)
- Diabetes, adrenal insufficiency
- Hematologic disorders (platelet disorder)
- Chronic rheumatologic disorder (e.g. lupus)
- Gastrointestinal disorder (e.g. Crohn's)

OR

If you experience any of the high-risk symptoms, then seek medical care promptly

NO

Most cases of flu-like illness in healthy students do not need to be seen by a medical clinician. If you are unsure you can always call and ask to speak with a nurse to review your symptoms and medical conditions. It is best to review the self-care instructions on the UHCS website. There are also instructions on caring for your fever and isolation.

Is there medicine to treat the flu?

For most healthy adults, medicine is not generally prescribed, but antiviral drugs are available that can treat both seasonal flu and H1N1. These drugs can shorten the duration of the illness. They need to be prescribed by a doctor and work best when started during the first 2 days of symptoms. Currently these drugs are expected to be used only for people who require hospitalization or have a chronic medical condition that puts them at high risk for serious flu complications.

I had flu symptoms but feel better now. Can I go back to work and/or classes?

Persons with flu-like symptom should stay home and avoid contact with others. You can return to school and/or work after your fever is gone (without using any fever reducing medication) for at least 24 hours.

This is an important public health measure that will help limit the spread of the flu virus.

Should I get vaccinated for seasonal flu and H1N1? And when will it be available?

A yearly seasonal flu vaccine is recommended as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal flu. **A seasonal flu vaccine will not protect you against H1N1.** A vaccine for H1N1 flu should be available by November and is being recommended for the 18-24 year old age group.

Seasonal flu clinics are scheduled throughout September. If you have a chronic medical problem please contact UHCS to receive your flu vaccine. It is best to check the University Health and Counseling Services website for times and dates of seasonal flu vaccine clinics and to stay updated on news regarding the availability of H1N1 vaccine and scheduled clinics.

How does the flu spread?

People that have the flu usually cough, sneeze and have a runny nose which all produce droplets containing the virus. These tiny droplets contain the flu virus. Other people can get the virus by touching contaminated surfaces, getting these droplets in their nose and mouth or by inhaling the droplets. The flu can be spread from 1 day prior to getting sick to up to 5 days after getting sick.

Should I go to work and/or class if my roommate is sick?

Students who feel well but have a roommate with flu-like symptoms can go to school and/or work as usual. These people should monitor their health everyday for symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, and/or muscle aches and pains, as well as take everyday precautions including washing their hands often with soap and water.

MORE INFORMATION

UHCS	617-373-2772
Check the website for the most up-to-date information	
We Care	617-373-4384
Housing and Residential Life	617-373-2814
NUPD	617-373-2121
On campus emergencies	ext. 3333
Off campus emergencies	dial 911