



September 21, 2009

Dear Trojan Parents,

As you may know, the flu is affecting many college students this season. We are working closely with the Los Angeles County Health Department to monitor flu conditions and will keep the campus community updated through the Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness website: <http://emergencyprep.usc.edu/>.

Fortunately, the vast majority of young adults experience a mild form of the flu. Because the virus is easily spread from person to person, we are undertaking a widespread effort to educate our community about how to minimize the flu's reach and impact. Please help us reinforce the following messages with your students:

**Routinely wash your hands with soap and water.** Alcohol-based hand cleaners are effective if soap and water are not available. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth to prevent the spread of germs. When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with your inner elbow/sleeve or with a tissue and then wash your hands. Don't share towels, drinking glasses, or any item that would transmit the virus from mouth to mouth.

**Know the signs and symptoms of flu.** Symptoms of flu include fever or chills and cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting.

**Most individuals with the flu do not need to see a health care provider.** People (with flu symptoms) who should contact a healthcare provider are those who are at higher risk for complications: pregnant women, people 65 years and older, or individuals who have a compromised immune system or a special medical concern such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or cardiac problems. People at higher risk of flu complications who become sick may benefit from early treatment with antiviral medicines. In addition, if you experience any of the following: fever of  $>101^{\circ}$  for 3+ days, a severe earache, shortness of breath, chest pain, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe or persistent vomiting, wheezing, severe head/neck pain, or rash, or flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and/or are worse, contact your health care provider immediately.

**If you become ill, stay at home or in your campus residence (self-isolate).** Drink plenty of clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, and electrolyte beverages) to keep from becoming dehydrated. Stay in a separate room, if possible. If someone is caring for you, maintain 6 feet of distance and wear a mask, if possible, when the person is in the room. Students should ask a roommate or friend to check on them and to bring food and supplies if needed. If students have a meal plan they should email their name, cell phone #, ID #, Building, and Room # to [usc dining@auxiliaries.usc.edu](mailto:usc dining@auxiliaries.usc.edu) for a special meal delivery.

**Self-isolation means students should not attend classes or any other public/campus event.** The USC faculty has been made aware of the expected incidence of the flu among our students and other members of our academic

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community. Faculty members have been advised that students will need to self isolate and request assignment extensions and laboratory or exam make-ups. Faculty members will use judgment and discretion in dealing with these requests and, when appropriate, provide the benefit of the doubt to students. Students should email professors and instructors to inform them of their self-isolation due to illness and receive appropriate instructions for class work and other responsibilities.

Student may return to their routine 24 hours after the fever is gone. They may leave their residences and attend classes, public events, etc., when their temperature is normal without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen) for 24 hours.

**Get vaccinated against either flu.** The seasonal flu vaccine is available at many pharmaceutical and other healthcare locations, including the Student Health Center. People at higher risk of flu complications (see "Most individuals with the flu" above) should be sure to get vaccinated. The H1N1 flu vaccine will likely be available by early November. For information about priority groups for vaccination, visit [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm).

For more information about how to respond to the flu, please visit our University Park Health Center website, [www.usc.edu/uphc](http://www.usc.edu/uphc), or call one of the following numbers:

- **USC Flu Information Line**, (213) 740-8116 (available Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
- **After-Hours Healthcare Advice Line**, (213) 740-9355

Thank you for your support in keeping our USC community healthy.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Neinstein, M.D.  
Executive Director,  
University Park Health Center