

Important Flu Information

(09/03/09)

The start of a new academic year is now underway. Each fall, unfortunately, also marks the beginning of flu season. This one is likely to bring some potentially unusual challenges. We will experience not only the expected seasonal influenza but also the 2009 H1N1 influenza, which is now circulating worldwide.

Johnston Community College will monitor the situation and will provide updates as needed. The college will treat this situation as we would a seasonal flu outbreak with emphasis on good hand washing practices and proper cough etiquette. These procedures are consistent with the current information provided by state and local health officials and their pandemic plans. If the health authorities' recommendations should change in the future, JCC would follow their lead.

At this time, JCC officials are urging faculty, staff and students to use the same precautionary measures that they would during the height of winter flu season.

To help you avoid the flu, health officials recommend that you incorporate the following habits, which are good general practices and especially important during flu outbreaks, into your routine.

- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Practice respiratory etiquette. The main way flu spreads is from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, so it's important that you cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, you should cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not your hands.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). While sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Talk to your health care provider about whether you should be vaccinated. CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal flu. Also students, faculty, and staff who are at higher risk for flu complications from 2009 H1N1 flu, should consider getting the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). For more information about priority groups for vaccination, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm.
- Practice good health habits – get plenty of sleep, exercise, eat nutritious meals, manage stress and drink plenty of fluids.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. If someone you live with becomes sick, monitor your health daily and do not attend class if you develop flu-like symptoms.

According to the CDC, the symptoms of H1N1 flu are very similar to the “regular” flu.

- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Body Aches
- Upper respiratory tract symptoms (cough, sore throat, runny nose)
- Unusual fatigue
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Our faculty will work with students regarding class absences related to flu or flu-like symptoms. As always, students should continue to notify their instructors by email regarding absence(s) from class.

The college will continue to provide updated information about H1N1 on the JCC website based on available data from local health officials.

Faculty, staff, and students will also be notified through campus email and can also sign up to receive text message alerts through [School Dispatch](#).

More information can be found at:

<http://www.flu.gov>

<http://www.flu.ncdhhs.gov/epi/gcdc/flu.html>

http://www.co.johnston.nc.us/mainpage.cfm?category_level_id=1085

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