

H1N1 (Swine) INFLUENZA BULLETIN

May 4, 2009

In the past few days, cases of H1N1 influenza have appeared in Virginia and on one college campus, Washington and Lee University in Lexington. The Virginia Health Commissioner, Dr. Remley published a bulletin that all University personnel should have received two days ago. JMU and the University Health Center have been preparing for situations like this for several years, and remain vigilant to the local, state, national and international situation.

Swine flu illness is very similar to the seasonal flu that appears every year from about November to March. The symptoms include some or all of: runny nose, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough and fever. If you develop these symptoms, you should seek medical care within 48 hours to be evaluated for influenza.

The JMU Health Center is able to test for the usual types of influenza, not Swine influenza, but if your test is positive for type A, or there are suspected symptoms by the CDC guidelines, further testing by the State Health Department may be necessary, and there will be a consideration of antiviral treatment with one of the two medications known to be effective in minimizing the symptoms. There is no cure for a virus infection.

Health officials advise that if you get sick, stay at home to prevent spreading illness to others, but consider seeking medical attention before 48 hours of illness has occurred.

To help prevent illness, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or cough into your sleeve at the elbow. If you used a tissue, throw it away immediately and wash your hands with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

Avoid contact with sick people. If you must be in public, try not to touch your nose, mouth or eyes in hopes of preventing infection. Wash your hands with soap and water as often as you can.

For continuing information, see the Centers for Disease Control site: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu
Students with suspected illness may call the Health Center, 540-568-6178.