Avoiding and Coping with Influenza
Applies to H1N1 2009 (Swine) AND Seasonal Flu
SSU Student Health Center (SHC)

1. **Avoid flu virus transmission and exposure:**
   - Always cover coughs and sneezes. Use your sleeve, elbow, or a tissue.
   - Dispose of used tissues in the trash & wash hands immediately.
   - Clean hands often with soap & water or alcohol based hand sanitizer.
   - Don’t share contaminated or personal items with others (e.g. food, drink, utensils, unwashed towels, etc.)
   - Keep your living & working areas clean – wipe down faucets, door handles, keyboards, etc.
   - Avoid close contact with others who are ill.
   - Keep your immune system healthy and ready to fight germs by following a healthy lifestyle.
   - Get seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine when it becomes available to you.

2. **How to tell if you might have the flu:**
   - Symptoms include the sudden onset of shaking chills or fever >100˚ plus significant cough, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, fatigue, etc.
   - Take your temperature with a thermometer. Fever is a key indicator of flu-like illness and of recovery.
   - Read Cold or Influenza, Which is It? on the other side of this paper.
   - Lab testing for H1N1 flu is not currently recommended by Public Health Officials.

3. **What to do if you get flu symptoms:**
   - Most people are expected to recover from the flu without needing to go out for a medical visit
   - Stay home and away from other people while you are ill.
   - Continue self isolation until 24 hours have elapsed with no fever AND no fever reducing medicines.
   - Wear a surgical mask covering your mouth and nose any time you can’t avoid being near others.
   - Use a new mask daily and when soiled. Dispose of your mask directly in the trash after use.
   - Notify roommates & housemates. Also notify Residential Life staff if you live in the Residence Halls.
   - Notify professors by phone or e-mail to avoid falling behind academically.
   - Take good care of yourself – rest, fluids, food, & acetaminophen or ibuprofen for muscle aches or fever.
   - Antiviral medications have significant side effects, are only marginally effective in uncomplicated flu, and according to the Centers for Disease Control should only be prescribed in medically severe or high complication risk circumstances (see below). The Student Health Center follows CDC guidelines.
   - If you need medical attention or have concerns, telephone the Student Health Center or another healthcare provider before appearing for care so they can provide guidance or prepare for your arrival if it is determined that you need to be seen.

4. **Special Circumstances for those with flu-like illness:**
   - If you are pregnant or have significant chronic medical conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes immune suppression, obesity, chronic neuromuscular disease, etc.) you are at increased risk of flu complications and should contact your healthcare provider promptly, as early treatment with anti-virals may be warranted.
   - Urgent medical attention at a hospital or urgent care center may be warranted for patients with severe illness. Don’t delay seeking medical attention if you develop any of these symptoms: (rapid, difficult breathing, pain or pressure in chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, intense persistent vomiting, several days of fever ≥ 102˚ or if flu-like symptoms improve but then return with high fever & worse cough.

5. **Watch for flu updates and information specifically for SSU students at** [www.sonoma.edu/shc/](http://www.sonoma.edu/shc/)

6. **Get thermometers, hand sanitizer, & surgical masks** at the Student Health Center or a drug store.

7. **Follow CDC Recommendations:**
   - [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/sick.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/sick.htm) — guidelines on what to do if you’re sick with flu
   - [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm) — what to do when someone you live with has flu like symptoms.