

November 9, 2009

Dear Students,

The Student Health Center has just received a small supply of H1N1 shots and would like to begin its immunization efforts for H1N1 influenza by first offering vaccination to students who are at highest risk for complications from influenza.

We anticipate the arrival of more shots over these next weeks and will then also be able to offer vaccination to healthy students. Since H1N1 has most commonly affected children and young adults, the Student Health Center strongly encourages all students to obtain this vaccine once it's available. The vaccine has been thoroughly studied, is produced in exactly the same manner as seasonal influenza vaccine, and is a safe, effective tool in protecting yourself from H1N1 influenza.

At the current time, the following students are eligible for H1N1 vaccine and may come to the Student Health Center Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on a walk-in basis to receive vaccine while supplies last:

- Medical, nursing and audiology students who are not eligible to receive the nasal vaccine
- Pregnant students
- Students who are immunosuppressed
- Students who are caregivers or household contacts of children less than 6 months of age
- Students who are caregivers or household contacts of bone marrow transplant recipients
- Students with one of the following chronic health conditions:
 - Diabetes
 - Lung disease, including asthma requiring daily medications
 - Heart, liver, or kidney disease
 - Blood disorders such as sickle cell anemia
 - Neurological disease

We also believe it's especially important to protect our students from seasonal flu this year, since both H1N1 and seasonal viruses are expected to continue to widely circulate this winter. There are both personal and public health reasons to get both flu vaccines. Having flu twice (seasonal + H1N1) is a great disruption to a student's academic and social life! In addition, ill students may inadvertently pass influenza to high risk individuals such as professors and other students, and may also expose family members when home over Thanksgiving and Winter Break.

In addition to receiving annual H1N1 and seasonal influenza vaccinations, the most important tool to protect yourself is frequent hand washing and avoiding the sharing of food, drink or personal items, such as toothbrushes and makeup, with others. Patients with influenza are contagious starting 24 hours before symptoms begin, meaning that even a seemingly well person can infect others before knowing that he/she is ill. The Student Health's website at www.vanderbilt.edu/student_health/link/swine-flu contains valuable links and FAQ's that you should find helpful.

Any student with a temperature greater than 100.0 and cough or sore throat should call the Student Health Center at 615-322-2427 and make an appointment for evaluation.

Sincerely,
The Student Health Center