

SUBJECT: Flu Prevention Information and Resources

DATE: Monday, April 27, 2009

TIME: 7:15 p.m.

Dear Students:

As you may know, several confirmed cases of mild swine flu have been identified in New York City.

Columbia will follow the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other appropriate agencies in fashioning the University's responses to a matter of understandable public concern. Currently, there are no changes to University operations or activities based on these public health recommendations. The federal CDC has issued a recommendation to avoid non-essential travel to Mexico during this time.

The best thing everyone can do at the present time is to practice normal precautionary hygiene such as regular hand-washing. If you have flu-like symptoms, it is recommended that you stay home from work or school and avoid public activities.

Tips for Preventing the Flu:

1. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
2. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or the elbow of your arm when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
4. Get an influenza shot annually. The current influenza vaccine formulation is not protective against avian or swine influenza. However, a recent study suggests annual influenza immunization of the elderly has a cumulative protective effect, resulting in reduced mortality, particularly in older individuals.
5. Clean things that are touched often. Clean things that are touched often at home, work, or school like door or refrigerator handles, computer key boards / mouse, phone and water faucets.
6. Avoid close contact with others who are ill. Avoid holding, hugging or kissing anyone who has a cold or the flu.

For ongoing updates and more prevention tips, please visit:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/studentervices/preparedness/>

University leadership continues to monitor the situation closely and will keep you informed of any developments that affect the CU community.

Additionally, if you are interested in monitoring updates on your own, the most recent information is available on the CDC website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/index.htm>

Sincerely,

Samuel Seward, M.D.  
Assistant Vice President  
Health Services at Columbia

