

## **EIU Health Services H1N1 Update – November 1, 2009**

By the end of the tenth week of classes at Eastern Illinois University, Health Service had identified 300 cases of Influenza. Before Homecoming weekend at EIU, approximately 100 cases of Flu had been diagnosed, but for each of the two weeks since Homecoming, 100 cases have been seen weekly. During the first eight weeks of classes, ten to fifteen diagnoses were made per week. Now for the past two weeks, 100 students per week have been seen for Influenza.

The volume of students seen at Health Service has remained approximately ten to fifteen percent higher than usual for this time of year. However, due to the increased demand for appointments many routine appointments are being deferred. Most of the students seen at Health Service have upper respiratory illnesses.

Students with Influenza are being managed per the CDC's recommendations for colleges and universities. When possible, students are sent home to recover and are asked not to return to campus and classes until they have been fever-free for twenty-four hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Only students with severe illness or underlying illness are treated with antiviral drugs. Most cases have remained mild to moderate and students typically return to class within one week. The Office of Registration notifies instructors of those students with Flu. Notes are not required for students to return to classes.

The most recent CDC update states that forty-eight states, including Illinois are now reporting widespread influenza activity. This many reports of widespread activity are unprecedented during seasonal flu. Visits to doctors and hospitalizations for influenza-like illness are climbing and are higher than expected for this time of year. Influenza-like activity is now higher than what is seen during the peak of many regular flu seasons. Almost all of the influenza viruses identified so far are 2009 H1N1 influenza A. These viruses remain similar to the virus chosen for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine, and remain susceptible to the antiviral drugs oseltamivir and zanamivir with rare exception.

Please refer to: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) for more information.

Many students, parents and employees have asked when Eastern Illinois University will receive and administer the H1N1 vaccine. Although EIU placed its order for the vaccine early, Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) decided to honor all requests for the vaccine from county health departments and hospitals before filling any other orders. This decision has been particularly disappointing since colleges and universities across the state have been dealing with the H1N1 virus in increasing numbers since the beginning of the school year. It is estimated that the vaccine may arrive on our campus near the end of November. Plans have been made for mass vaccination clinics as soon as the vaccine is available. The campus will be notified by email, newspapers, newsletters and other promotional campaigns as soon as dates have been determined.

Updates to the Health Service website are placed regularly. We encourage you to visit our site frequently and remain informed.

Sincerely,  
Sheila D. Baker, MD  
Medical Director Eastern Illinois University