

August 11, 2009

To: MTSU Faculty and Staff

RE: H1N1 Influenza

Early this summer, cases of H1N1 influenza began to appear on campus. As fall and winter approach, we expect waves of the illness to cause significant numbers of students, faculty, and staff to become ill with influenza virus.

At this time, individuals with H1N1 influenza virus have not shown any increased morbidity as compared to those contracting regular seasonal influenza. One notable exception to this is pregnant women, especially in the second or third trimester, which should be watched very closely with this illness.

In order to protect our students, faculty, and staff, we are following the CDC's recommendation that all persons ill with suspected H1N1 influenza remain out of school and/or work until they are without fever for 24 hours. This is a change from the CDC's initial recommendation that anyone with the H1N1 flu be out 7 days or for 24 hours after the last symptoms - whichever is longer. This change reflects the fact that the H1N1 influenza virus typically produces fever for 2-4 days with viral shedding dramatically reduced within 24 hours of resolution of fever. We will be providing a note for students to this effect for class and work to help slow spread of the illness while we await H1N1 vaccination. It is the student's responsibility to contact professors and their workplace in regards to any absences due to illness.

MTSU Student Health Services is involved with the CDC, as well as local and regional health departments through the Sentinel Provider Influenza Surveillance Program. We are continually sending suspected flu samples to the state lab to help with surveillance of the H1N1 flu, its severity, and anti-viral resistance patterns. We are doing our best to stay on the front of the curve in relation to knowledge regarding this virus.

For more information about H1N1 influenza please see MTSU's Student Health Services web link: www.mtsu.edu/healthservices and the Center for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov.

Sincerely,

Richard Chapman

Director MTSU Student Health Services