YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS CONSISTENT WITH INFLUENZA

People who have influenza (the flu) often have some or all of the following symptoms including: fever/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle/ body aches, fatigue, and in some cases, vomiting and diarrhea.

In most cases if you are generally healthy and NOT experiencing severe influenza symptoms (high fever, difficulty breathing, chest pain, persistent vomiting, severe diarrhea or dehydration), your symptoms are best managed with home care unless you are pregnant or have a medical condition which puts you at higher risk of flu-related complications.

Influenza may be more severe in patients who are pregnant or those with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes or asthma; For a list of people who may be more likely to get flu-related complications go to: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm

If you have such conditions and are symptomatic, please call the Advice Nurse at (510) 643-7197 (for students) or contact your medical provider.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The flu commonly lasts 5-7 days. After you have recovered, you may continue to feel more weak and tired than usual. In some people, the cough may persist for several weeks.

You are contagious from one day before symptoms begin until 24 hours after your fever is gone. Stay home, do not attend work or classes, and keep away from other people until you have been fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications. If you live in the residence halls, please stay out of the dining commons. Ask your friends to deliver your meals.

HERE’S HOW TO HELP YOURSELF FEEL BETTER UNTIL YOU RECOVER

• Get plenty of rest. Don’t smoke or drink alcohol.

• Weakness – You become dehydrated more easily when you have a high fever. Drink lots of different non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated liquids, such as chicken soup, juice, water. If you have diarrhea or vomiting you may benefit from Pedialyte or diluted Gatorade to help replace lost electrolytes.

• Fever, muscle aches and headache – Take ibuprofen (same as Motrin or Advil) four 200 mg pills with food every 8 hours. If fever is still high, you can add Tylenol – 1000 mg every 4-6 hours, up to a maximum of 4000 mg in 24 hours. This will help a lot! It may be helpful to alternate ibuprofen and Tylenol. Please follow directions and do not exceed recommended dosages.

• Cough – Cough medicine you buy over the counter with dextromethorphan may help a little. If the cough is really bothersome, prescription cough medicine will help.

• Runny nose – Take Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) 60 mg every 6-8 hours. It will help with nasal congestion.
**ANTIVIRALS (SUCH AS TAMIFLU) AND ANTIBIOTICS**

Antibiotics are not effective against viruses such as influenza.

Prescription antiviral medications, such as Tamiflu® (generic name oseltamivir) and Relenza® (generic name zanamivir), are not typically recommended for uncomplicated febrile illness in those individuals who are not also at increased risk for influenza complications. Antiviral medicines are highly recommended for those who have both influenza and an underlying significant medical condition. These medications are most effective if given early (within 2 days of getting sick) and may shorten the course of illness by 1-2 days or reduce the risk of hospitalization in those people with high risk medical conditions.

In limited cases where persons at very high risk for influenza complications (e.g. those who have specific underlying medical conditions or who are pregnant) have had close contact with a laboratory confirmed case of influenza, antiviral medication may be indicated. If you believe you have a condition which places you at higher risk for influenza complications, and you have had close contact with someone who has laboratory-confirmed case of influenza, please contact our nurse advice line at (510) 643-7197 to discuss your situation.

**BE ON ALERT**

If you experience any of the following warning signs, seek medical care:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Significant dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Fever greater than 104 degrees (40 C) **not responding to fever reducing medications.**

**PREVENT THE SPREAD**

The flu shot is recommended for almost everyone over the age of 6 months. Due to the severity of the current flu season flu vaccine is in limited supply. Please contact the Specialty desk to check on current vaccine availability at (510) 643-7177.

There are everyday actions you can do to help prevent the spread of germs that cause illnesses like influenza:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw tissue in the trash after you use it. Wash your hands afterward.
- Most importantly, wash your hands with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. The virus spreads from coughing the virus out into the air and from touching surfaces with your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth to reduce the spread of germs.

**CONCERNED ABOUT CLASSES?**

Faculty have been advised that this is a severe flu season and that ill students are being asked to stay home until 24 hours after their fever has resolved (without the use of fever reducing medications). You may want to email your professors or call them to discuss the situation if you are ill. The Faculty have also been advised that Tang does not issue doctor’s (or clinician’s) notes stating that you were ill, and that they should not require these when you return to class.

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**Students: please call the Advice Nurse at (510)643-7197 if you have additional questions.**

For up-to-date flu information, visit: [http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/home/news/FluResources.shtml](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/home/news/FluResources.shtml).

**Stay informed by visiting the UHS website:**

[http://uhs.berkeley.edu/](http://uhs.berkeley.edu/)