

Gettysburg College Health Service Influenza Update

The country is experiencing a virulent flu epidemic that is anticipated to last 16 weeks, considerably longer than previous epidemics.

Here is some information to assist you in staying healthy during the flu season:

Prevention: Get a flu shot! It's not too late to get the flu shot. If you get it now, it will provide partial or full protection within two weeks. Flu shots are available at the health center; please call (717)337-6970 to make an appointment.

Wash your hands; cover your cough, self-isolate if you have symptoms.

Common symptoms of influenza are:

- Abrupt onset of symptoms
- Fever \geq 100 deg. F or 38 degrees C. with chills and fatigue
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Vomiting and diarrhea have been reported.

How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

If you are infected with influenza you can spread the virus and infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5-7 days after.

If the following emergency warning signs are present you need urgent medical attention. You should contact your healthcare provider or go to the Emergency Room (911)

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen.
- Sudden dizziness.
- Confusion or increased lethargy.
- Severe or persistent vomiting.
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.

Treatment of influenza symptoms:

- Rest
- Drink a lot of liquids, i.e. water, juices, Gatorade.
- Take an over-the-counter medicine for muscle aches, and/or fever, but **don't take aspirin** if you have flu-like symptoms. Your healthcare provider will help you determine the best treatment for your symptoms.

- Suck on lozenges or hard candy for cough and gargle with warm salt water for sore throat relief.
- Antiviral influenza drugs, like Tamiflu, will be used in those at risk for complication of the flu. **These are persons with chronic medical conditions, immunosuppressed states, under the age of 5 and over the age of 65, under the age of 19 and receiving aspirin therapy, and women who are pregnant.**
- You will be asked to **self-isolate** while you are contagious. We prefer that you NOT come to work if you have the symptoms outlined above. You are considered contagious until you no longer have a fever and are off medications that reduce fever for 24 hours. **Please communicate with your supervisor as soon as possible to inform them of your absence.**

For more information on the Seasonal Influenza, you are referred to the following website: www.flu.gov