

Dear University of Richmond Student:

As you are aware, federal and state health officials are preparing for the possibility that the United States will experience an increase in both the number and the severity of novel influenza A (H1N1) cases this fall.

The University, working with state and local health officials, will closely monitor the H1N1 situation on campus and in the region as the fall semester begins. When H1N1 flu struck last spring, the University reviewed and refined its pandemic flu response plans, and it will continue to refine those plans in response to new developments.

In the meantime, health officials urge everyone to follow simple precautions that will help protect them from becoming ill with any type of flu. They seem simple, but they work.

- Cover your mouth when you cough.
- Frequently wash your hands or use the hand sanitizer that is widely available in public places around campus.
- Do not share cups and utensils.
- Call the Student Health Center Dial-A-Nurse (289-8700) if you develop flu-like symptoms.
- Students who live either on or off campus and who have influenza-like illness (ILI) should self-isolate—that is, stay away from others—in their dorm room or home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without having taken a fever-reducing medicine. They should stay self-isolated, except to get medical care or other necessities. Keeping away from others as much as possible reduces spreading the flu.

Your participation in these easy steps is vital to prevention of widespread flu among everyone living, studying, and working on campus. Although health officials do not advise shutting down campuses in the event of widespread flu, it might be necessary to curtail all but essential activities for a time, which would in turn lengthen the semester, delay academic and research work, and postpone or cancel many activities. Please talk with fellow students about the importance of following the prevention guidelines for your own benefit and the health of others.

The provost, the deans, and the faculty will consider the steps that would be necessary to help any student who comes down with influenza-like illness postpone and make up missed academic work.

The University's Student Health Center has created a Web site — healthcenter.richmond.edu/alert.html — that contains detailed information about H1N1 flu and our response on campus. Please visit that site for more information and updates on the status of the campus in regard to the flu season.

Sincerely,