

## **Information About Precautions and Preventive Requirements for the Flu Season**

Complete NYIT plans and preventive strategies may be found on the NYIT Web site at [www.nyit.edu/flu](http://www.nyit.edu/flu). These communications represent our institutional response based on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and New York State (NYS) requirements for students and health personnel. Complete text of the CDC recommendations may be found at [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect).

**Seasonal Influenza:** NYCOM students and students in the School of Health Professions who are in clinical rotations are included among personnel in health care settings who are to receive mandatory **annual vaccinations** against influenza by Nov. 30, according to recent New York State Department of Health emergency regulations. Exceptions to this policy are individuals with medical contraindication to the vaccination or a determination of an insufficient supply of vaccine by the New York State Commissioner of Health.

**H1N1:** When the H1N1 vaccine is released for distribution, the New York State regulation will also require mandatory **immunization against H1N1** for NYCOM students and students in the School of Health Professions who are in clinical rotations. It is currently anticipated that the vaccine will be available in mid-October. Further information will be provided to you as the New York State Department of Health releases updates.

**Documentation of vaccination: Students who lack documentation of vaccination or documentation of medical contraindications to the vaccine will not be allowed to continue in clerkships or clinical rotations.** Students may receive their vaccinations at the clinical affiliates where they are assigned or by their individual physician. The NYIT health insurance plan (United Health) covers the cost and administration of the vaccine. New York State Governor Patterson is urging all insurers to provide the vaccination at no cost to their insured.

**Preventive Precautions:** The following precautions are advised in order to reduce the spread of influenza:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleansers are also effective

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (then throw out the tissue). Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Common symptoms of influenza include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. The CDC recommends that people with flu-like illness stay home from work or school until 24 hours after they are free of fever or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. These agencies estimate that, in most cases, a person with flu will be ill for two to four days. They note that most people will recover without medical care and recommend seeing a doctor only if the illness is severe or if you are at high risk for complications.

**Required Reporting: Any student in a clinical clerkship or on assignment at a clinical site who contracts the flu or flu-like illness is required to provide the following three notifications: 1. the Director of Medical Education or Clinical Supervisor at the clerkship site; 2. the NYIT flu notification e-mail at [flu@nyit.edu](mailto:flu@nyit.edu) include student ID number, program, and clinical site; and 3. their NYCOM or SHP program director, who can facilitate rescheduling of clinical assignments.**

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The new challenges presented by the H1N1 influenza virus will require increased flexibility and understanding from all of us. At this time, we do not know the magnitude of the challenges that we face. We are monitoring the situation closely and will continue to provide information to you as we coordinate our efforts with the New York State Department of Health. Updates will be available as the flu season progresses at [www.nyit.edu/flu](http://www.nyit.edu/flu).