

Health Alert – Seasonal Flu 2018

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) seasonal flu is widespread across the United States. Sonoma County is seeing an increase in the number of reported flu cases in our region.

<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/news/7949259-181/sonoma-county-flu-season-claims?sba=AAS>

Additionally, this year's flu vaccine is a poor match between the vaccine and the viruses in circulation which makes it less effective in preventing the flu. The CDC still recommends getting a flu shot if you haven't already. The flu shot may still prevent some people from getting sick and vaccinated people may experience milder symptoms if they do get infected.

To help reduce the impact of seasonal flu on the campus, Student Health Services is advising staff and students with flu-like illness to follow CDC recommendations to self-isolate until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the use of medication. Call your health care provider for advice, as some people who are at higher risk will benefit from anti-viral medication if taken in the first 2-3 days of the flu.

Here are some recommendations to help you stay healthy:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your cough by covering your mouth and nose with a tissue, elbow, or shoulder, not into your hands.
- Know the signs and symptoms of the flu. Fever, body aches, chills, headache, fatigue, runny nose, cough, sore throat, vomiting, and diarrhea. A fever is a temperature that is equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Stay home if you have the flu or flu-like illness until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher) without the use of fever-reducing medications (any medicine that contains acetaminophen or an anti-inflammatory medication, like ibuprofen). Don't go to class or work.
- If you are sick, call Student Health Services to talk directly to a medical provider to determine if it is necessary for you to be seen in the health center. Staying away from others while sick can prevent others from getting sick.
- Seek medical attention if you have trouble breathing; have pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen; can't keep fluids down; sudden dizziness; confusion; or have a fever over 100 degrees for more than a day.
- Get vaccinated. Flu vaccines are still available in local pharmacies or at your local primary care provider office.