Flu 2020 UPDATE

Influenza (seasonal flu) activity is now widespread in North Carolina, including here on the ECU campus.

Symptoms come on suddenly and are more severe than a cold. Coughing, fever, muscle aches, headache, and runny nose are common with the flu; note that influenza is NOT the same illness as the “stomach flu”, which causes nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, although occasionally those symptoms are present with seasonal flu as well.

If a student is sick with flu-like symptoms:

- SHS and other public health officials recommend staying away from others until fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine) to help prevent the spread of flu.
- Cough or sneeze into one’s elbow area or into a tissue that is discarded.
- Wash hands often or use hand sanitizer.
- In most cases, if healthy and no underlying major medical issues like asthma, pregnancy, diabetes, HIV, heart conditions, cancer, etc, it is not necessary to see a health care provider since **flu typically resolves on its own**. However, if a student has other medical conditions, severe symptoms, or feels symptoms are not improving after several days, they should call SHS, their doctor, or if an emergency, call 911.
- Communicate early on with professors about illness—SHS cannot give class excuses for missed days or assignments.
- Obtain a buddy form to have a friend to pick up food for them at the dining hall by visiting the [ECU Campus Dining website](#).
- Notify professors know of flu illness via [Pirate Port](#) by selecting the “Flu Self Reporting Form”. This is **NOT** an excuse—it is merely a notification tool. These submissions are monitored by SHS and multiple submissions are referred to the Dean of Students office for follow up.

Flu FAQ:

- **Does SHS test for flu?**
  Yes, if necessary. It is done by swabbing nasal secretions. **In many cases** it is not helpful since the treatment for flu is based on symptoms, not test results, so treatment is the same whether the test is performed or not if the provider suspects flu.
- **Does Student Health give Tamiflu?**
  SHS follows the Centers for Disease Control guidance on prescribing Tamiflu; [learn more here](#).
- **How can students help themselves stay well?**
  The best ways to prevent the flu are to receive an annual flu vaccine, wash your hands frequently, avoid contact with sick persons, clean commonly used surfaces and objects, get adequate rest, eat well, and get daily exercise. SHS is out of flu vaccine for the current flu season but some pharmacies in the community still have available supply.

Questions about flu? Email us at [gotquestions@ecu.edu](mailto:gotquestions@ecu.edu)