**Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Influenza**

Influenza or flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by particular strains of viruses. Seasonal flu occurs every year, typically in the fall and winter. Pandemic flu is different. It is a global outbreak of the influenza disease that occurs when a new influenza virus appears in the human population. Because people have little or no immunity to the new strain, serious illness can occur, and the virus can spread easily and rapidly from person to person with no vaccine immediately available.

In the event of a pandemic outbreak in the United States, campus officials will work closely with the Stanford University Medical Center, under the guidance of the Santa Clara County Public Health Department and the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to determine the best course of action to reduce the risk of infection.

In the event that a pandemic poses a threat to the university community, campus officials will issue regular updates through the use of the web, email, telephone and other media, depending upon their continued availability. Advisories to staff members will be issued through Human Resources; faculty will be directed through deans and department chairs; and students will receive information from the office of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs. There also will be regular updates via the university’s home page http://www.stanford.edu, Stanford Report http://news.stanford.edu, Vaden Health Center http://vaden.stanford.edu, and the Stanford University Emergency Information website: http://emergency.stanford.edu.

For information about the university’s pandemic plan, visit http://ehs.stanford.edu.

**Flu prevention recommendations**

- Get a seasonal flu shot when they are available. Consult your health care provider or contact Vaden Health Center at 650-498-2336 for information on campus vaccine programs.
- Keep immune systems strong with regular exercise, nutritious foods, sufficient sleep and plenty of fluids
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs, and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid sharing eating utensils, water bottles, towels, or bedding without first washing these items with soap and hot water
- Clean surfaces soiled with bodily fluids with a household disinfectant. (Use gloves while cleaning.)
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw tissue in trash after use. If tissue is not available, direct the cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow, not into your hands.
- Avoid sharing eating utensils, water bottles, towels, or bedding without first washing these items with soap and hot water
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay informed about developments regarding a pandemic influenza by visiting the university’s webpage and the Stanford University Emergency Information website at http://emergency.stanford.edu