

January 29, 2018

To Our Campus Community:

Many of you by now have heard of or read about the flu this year. This year the flu season has begun and it will probably affect large numbers of people. This letter has been prepared by the Student Health Services to inform you about steps the University is taking to protect the health of faculty, staff and students. In addition, the SHS is working closely with the Kern County Public Health Department to provide updated advisories and follow their latest recommendations on prevention and treatment. Prevention is key to understanding and preventing transmission of this infectious disease. The following information is provided to assure a healthy and safe university community.

**1. What is influenza and what are the symptoms of Flu?**

Influenza, commonly called the "flu," is a contagious viral infection that affects the respiratory system — your nose, throat and lungs. Symptoms of the flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death.

**2. How does the flu spread?**

Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza.

**3. What precautions is California State University, Bakersfield taking to prevent flu on campus?**

It is possible that this current flu season will be long, start early, and affect large numbers of people in our community. California State University, Bakersfield, like many other universities across the United States, has experienced cases of influenza. University officials continue to monitor the situation. The University is being proactive in trying to prevent the spread of the flu. In addition, the University is asking all students, staff and faculty with flu-like symptoms to use their discretion and stay home if necessary until the symptoms have resolved (24 hours after fever). The University has recommended all students, staff and faculty receive their seasonal flu shots. Student Health Services has a limited supply of flu vaccines available, but has the ability to obtain more if a staff, faculty or student would still like to receive it. The cost of the vaccine is \$20.00.

**4. What steps can CSUB students, faculty and staff take to stay healthy and keep from spreading the flu?**

Here are four important ways faculty, students and staff can stay healthy and keep from getting sick with flu or spreading the flu. You can:

- a. **Practice good hand hygiene.** Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- b. **Practice respiratory etiquette.** The main way flu spreads is from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, so it's important that people cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not your hands.
- c. **Stay home if you are sick.** Stay home or in your place of residence for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever without taking Tylenol/Ibuprofen.

- d. **Talk to your health care provider about whether you should be vaccinated.** Students, faculty and staff who want protection from the flu are encouraged to get vaccinated for seasonal flu.

Students, faculty, and staff should take personal responsibility to help slow the spread of the flu virus. By practicing these steps, they can keep from getting sick from flu and help protect others from getting the flu.

**If you have symptoms of flu and have concerns regarding management issues, please call Kelsey Bailey, RN for consultation rather than presenting in-person to the Student Health Services.** In general, if you are not experiencing high fever, difficulty breathing, chest pain, persistent vomiting, severe diarrhea or instability related to dehydration, you will be advised to how you can manage symptoms with home care. If you are sick, avoid public contact to keep from spreading your illness to others. If your symptoms become worse and you need to be seen at the SHS, you should follow the following steps:

- Upon entering the SHS, masks will be placed at the front desk for you to wear.
- Use the hand sanitizer located by the front desk.
- A nurse will immediately take you to a triage room to prevent transmission to others.

**6. What is the best way for me to stay informed about flu?**

To stay updated on flu, check the following websites regularly:

Kern County Department of Public Health <http://www.co.kern.ca.us/health/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/consumer/prevention.htm>

**Students or Employees at California State University, Bakersfield should feel free to contact the Student Health Services with any questions or concerns regarding the Flu via telephone at (661)-654-2394.**