H1N1 Influenza: You’re sick. Here’s what to do!
An online guide by University Health Services

YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS CONSISTENT WITH INFLUENZA
In general, if you are NOT experiencing severe symptoms (high fever, difficulty breathing, chest pain, persistent vomiting, severe diarrhea or dehydration), your symptoms are best managed with home care unless you are pregnant or have a chronic medical condition. H1N1 may be more severe in patients who are pregnant or those with chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes or asthma; if you have such conditions and are symptomatic, please call the Advice Nurse at 510/643-7197 (for students) or contact your medical provider.

ANTIVIRALS (SUCH AS TAMIFLU) AND ANTIBIOTICS
Antibiotics are not effective against viruses such as influenza. There are some antiviral medicines that are given only to those with severe medical conditions. These medicines merely shorten the illness by a day or two, and are most effective if given early in the course of illness. Antivirals are not recommended for the general population.

HERE’S HOW TO HELP YOURSELF FEEL BETTER UNTIL IT GOES AWAY
• Get plenty of rest. Don’t smoke or drink alcohol.
• Weakness – You become dehydrated more easily when you have a high fever. Drink lots of different non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated liquids, such as chicken soup, juice, water, Pedialyte, diluted Gatorade.
• Fever, muscle aches and headache – Take ibuprofen (same as Motrin or Advil) four 200 mg pills with food every 8 hours. If fever is still high, you can add Tylenol – 1000 mg every 4-6 hours, up to a maximum of 4000 mg in 24 hours. This will help a lot! It may be helpful to alternate ibuprofen and Tylenol. Please follow directions.
• Cough – Cough medicine you buy over the counter with dextromethorphan may help a little. If the cough is really bothersome, prescription cough medicine will help.
• Runny nose – Take Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) 60 mg every 6-8 hours. It will help to dry everything up.

WHAT TO EXPECT
The flu will last 5-7 days. After you have recovered, you may continue to feel more weak and tired than usual. In some people, the cough may persist for several weeks.

You are contagious from one day before symptoms begin until 24 hours after your fever is gone. Stay home, do not attend work or classes and keep away from other people until you have been fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications. If you live in the residence halls, please stay out of the dining commons. Ask your friend, Health Worker or RA to deliver your meals.

BE ON ALERT
If you experience any of the following warning signs, seek medical care:
• Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
• Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
• Significant dizziness
• Confusion
• Severe or persistent vomiting
• Fever greater than 104 degrees (40 C) not responding to medication

PREVENT THE SPREAD
There are everyday actions you can do to help prevent the spread of germs that cause illnesses like influenza:
• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw tissue in the trash after you use it. Wash your hands afterward.
• Most importantly, wash your hands with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. The virus spreads from coughing the virus out into the air and from touching surfaces with your hands.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth to reduce the spread of germs.

CONCERNED ABOUT CLASSES?
Faculty have been instructed NOT to require a “doctor’s note” for absences. You may want to email your professors or call them to discuss the situation.

Students: please call the Advice Nurse at (510)643-7197 if you have additional questions.
For flu shot information, visit: http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/home/news/flushots.shtml.

Stay informed by visiting the UHS website:
http://uhs.berkeley.edu/