

H1N1 influenza virus hits Pennsylvania

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Schools across the nation have been guided by the Center for Disease Control in attempting to reduce the spreading of the 2009 H1N1 Influenza virus previously referred to as Swine Flu.

People in college settings are more at risk of catching and spreading the flu. College campuses act as a "point of spread." Faculty and students can easily spread the virus to others as well as to the larger community. The highest numbers of cases of H1N1 flu have been confirmed among people ages 5-24 years old. They are also at risk of getting seasonal influenza according to the CDC.

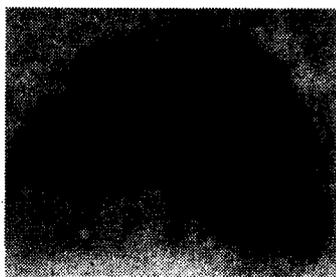


Photo by courtesy of Center for Disease Control
Pictured above is the H1N1 virus

The Pennsylvania State University has a Pandemic Response Plan to ensure preparedness for a pandemic outbreak. Based off information from WHO, CDC, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pandemic Response Plan takes assumes the first wave of the pandemic will occur in the fall or spring semester while classes are in session. Also, if the spreading of the flu virus reaches high levels on campus, PSU will suspend classes four to eight weeks for each wave of the pandemic.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health indicates the H1N1 virus is the similar to seasonal influenza and most people have little or no immunity. According to the CDC, symptoms of the flu include: fever (though not present in every case), cough, sore throat, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, chills, headache, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea. Emergency warning signs of flu in adults include: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen,

sudden dizziness, confusion, and severe or persistent vomiting.

According to Flu.gov, as of Oct. 1, in the United States, 47 of the states ordered a cumulative total of 1,378,200 doses of the nasal-spray Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine for prevention of the H1N1 virus. Pennsylvania is one of the states, which ordered the vaccine.

Vaccination is a higher priority for some groups of people. According to Flu.gov, pregnant women, household contacts and caregivers, health care professionals, everyone ages 6-to-24, and people over 50.

"CDC expects both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu to cause illness, hospital stays and deaths this season. CDC has recommendations on who should get vaccinated against seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu," according to the Center for Disease Control Web Site.

As of Oct. 5, in Dauphin County there have been 46 confirmed cases of the H1N1 influenza virus and 2748 total confirmed cases. There have also been a total of 14 deaths,



Photo courtesy of Center for Disease Control
Above pictured is the Diagnostic test for detecting the H1N1 virus developed by the CDC.

according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

The World Health Organization raised the pandemic alert from "Phase 5" to "Phase 6" on June 11, not because of the severity of the H1N1 virus, but because of the rapid spreading of the virus. Designation of "Phase 6" indicates that a global pandemic is under way. However, WHO rates the overall severity of the influenza pandemic to be moderate.

According to the Web Site Flu.gov, "A flu pandemic occurs

when a new influenza A virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity in the human population; the virus causes serious illness and spreads easily from person-to-person worldwide."

In a press release from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Secretary of Health Everette James said, "We expect to see a steady rise in H1N1 flu cases in the coming months, so it is essential that Pennsylvanians have ready access to the latest important developments."

DAUGHTER: Story delights and enlightens

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According to Fernandez, Castro visited mostly at night and always made her mother swoon. "Only Grandma called him the devil," she said.

Fernandez then discussed the changes Castro brought to Cuba, such as ration booklets and committees responsible for spotting any opposition to the regime. Castro isolated the island by banning travel and controlling all telecommunications.

Cuba, however, was never a reclusive country, Fernandez emphasized. The Middle East and North Africa were vital to Castro's foreign policy, and Cuba has been in many guerilla wars, she said.

Fernandez decided to leave Cuba when she realized her daughter couldn't receive a proper education there. With some financial help from personal friends in the U.S., Fernandez disguised herself as a Spanish tourist and fled to Spain with her daughter.

The presentation was then opened up to a question-and-answer format. When someone asked if

she'd go back to Cuba after Castro died, Fernandez responded, "I won't be the first one on the first plane."

To respond to a question about Cuba's national health care, she said that Cuba is not the only country to have it. After rattling off a few other countries that have national health care, she concluded that basically everywhere but here has it.

After the presentation, Suset Manso, a senior majoring in communications, took a picture with Fernandez. "She said everything that I experienced, because I myself was born there," Manso said of Fernandez. Manso said she enjoyed hearing a similar experience to hers narrated by a talented writer.

When asked in a private interview with The Capital Times why she wrote a book in 1999 about her experience, she said she wanted to "tell the story in a different way, in a more personal way that would give veracity to the story and make it fun." Fernandez brought both veracity and humor to her not-so-funny tale presented Tuesday night at Penn State Harrisburg.

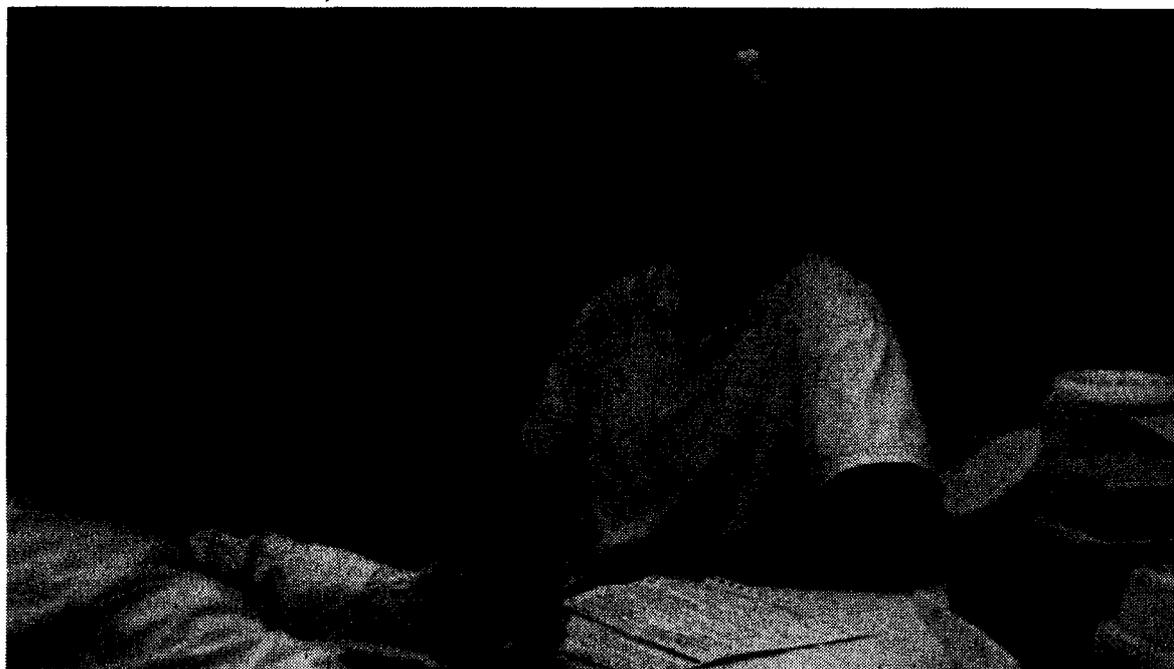


Photo by Jenna DeNoyelles/The Capital Times
Above Dr. Haddad gets his seasonal influenza shot on Oct. 6 at PSU

H1n1 flu vaccines have begun to arrive in Philadelphia

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Health officials say doses of the swine flu vaccine have begun arriving in Philadelphia, as well as southwest and north-central regions of the state.

Philadelphia Health Commissioner Donald Schwartz says

most of the first shipment of the H1N1 vaccine is going to a few pediatric practices.

Health officials, however, are not identifying specifically which providers are receiving it.

Children ages five to nine will receive the vaccine first because they require two doses and be-

cause they are part of the age group that seems most likely get contract the virus.

The state Department of Health says it expects at least 2.5 million doses will be available by the end of October for other age groups around the state.