

# Opinion

## H1N1 vaccine safe and secure

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H1N1 (sometimes called Swine Flu) is the latest pandemic to hit our country. It is a new strain of influenza, also known as the flu, and is spreading from person to person at alarming rates. What differentiates H1N1 from more common strains of the flu is most people have some immunity to fight off more common strains, due previous exposure to some form of the seasonal flu virus. However because H1N1 is a new strain people have no immunity. Some signs of the H1N1 are fatigue, fever, sore, throat, muscle aches, chills, coughing and sneezing. Some people experience diarrhea and vomiting, but most people feel better within a week. However there have been a few cases where some people get pneumonia or other serious illnesses leading to hospitalization or even death.

I am a true fan of the yearly flu shot. I have been getting them annually as far back as I can remember. However one year I missed my shot and come February I experienced the flu head on. Let me tell you this was not an experience I would want to go through ever again. With the threat of H1N1 to our specific age group and that our school was specifically targeted, it made me very worried. So I looked into getting the H1N1 vaccine after hearing a buzz about it saying its side affects were worse than the flu itself!

LAIV (Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine) is the vaccine created for the H1N1 strain. It is a new vaccine, which was recently put on the market. LAIV was created to target just H1N1 and will not protect the user from other strains of the flu, therefore a regular flu shot is recommended. It can be sprayed into the nose or given in a shot. So I ask myself is it safe?

The side effects of LAIV are similar to the side effects of a regular flu shot. For adults the side effects of LAIV are runny nose, headache, sore throat and cough. Children may experience runny nose, headache, vomiting, muscle aches, fever, and upper respiratory symptoms. According to the Minnesota Department of Health LAIV was studied in 20 clinical trials with 6,000 participants ages 5-49, and 4,100 children ages 6-59 months. Of these participants less than 1% of the recipients experienced reactions.

After doing some extensive research I believe that the H1N1 vaccine is as harmless as my normal flu shot and that people should receive the vaccine. According to my research the side effects do not out way the actual virus itself. The LAIV vaccine has been studied and tested and people should not fear that it is a new vaccine "rushed for delivery". It is as safe as any other flu vaccination and in order to protect ourselves and the people around us I believe that we should be vaccinated, that we should take Penn State Harrisburg off the list of possible places to be hit with the strain. For information about where to get vaccinated please visit <http://www.flu.gov/>.

## More to an education than money

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TIME Magazine reports France is the latest nation to join an international trend encouraging truant high school students to return to their academics. The controversial new policy requires that kids receive payment for good attendance and superior grades, a desperate tactic in the most recent efforts to cap soaring dropout rates. France, however, tries to disarm critic's cries of bribery by establishing controlled bank accounts for each student, maintaining that the money is only used for funding educational expenses, like trips abroad, higher learning classes, etc. The idea is that this system is superior to the lesser known, but miraculously relaxed systems of Britain and the United States, whom don't regulate what students can do with their cash rewards.

The logistics of this educational incentive are borderline unconstitutional. France and Britain don't operate under the same constraints of American democracy, but when did education transform from a necessary tool of society to an obligatory chore mercilessly burdened upon undeserving adolescents? Paying students to attend school implies that the only reward to be derived from a solid education is money. France claims that overcrowding in trade schools displaces students in classes they have no interest in whatsoever, therefore "forcing" kids to quit altogether, otherwise suffer through a boring class. So naturally, of course, the only solution remains is to stuff money into their pockets instead.

I'd like to see those poor unfortunate students attend high school in the United States, where every class offers little, if any, interest at all. Nevertheless, I, along with millions of others, soldiered on through the monotonous cycle of algebra and biology to arrive on the other side of higher education with a degree and a decent chance to survive in the world. We are raised to be strong, resilient and independent adults, capable of forging our way through the perils of life through perseverance and dedication. Where does determination fall when the government removes the meaning of education itself from the picture?

It is only in the last century that secondary school became the requirement of every citizen in the United States; never once was education spelled out by the founding fathers as a right, but rather, a privilege bestowed upon the youth to help establish this country. Self-motivation and hard work are the cornerstones of the "American Dream" that lies within every person, in some way shape or form. If nothing else, the ideals of self improvement and societal responsibility that drive many of us through the dreaded public school system, into the jaws of higher education and out into the world to successfully survive the financial calamity that is reality, should remain our only reward.

## Zombie preparedness should be a priority

By PHILIP NARSH  
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The University of Florida recently removed a plan from the disaster preparedness and recovery links on their website that they felt to be unnecessary. Which plan would that be? Why, the plan that detailed what to do in the event of zombies.

Doug Johnson, manager of University of Florida's e-Learning Support Services, wrote the impressively detailed plan. The plan was six pages long and included "tentative action items" such as barricading doors and equipping the school faculty with weapons to defend themselves against the undead.

"Some employees may prefer weapons such as chainsaws, baseball bats, and explosives that have been shown to be effective against zombies," the plan notes. "Given the stress on staff to be anticipated during a zombie outbreak, employees should be given the flexibility to choose their own weaponry thereby diminishing anxiety."

Johnson's plan went on to provided medical information for how to properly identify and treat individuals showing symptoms of "zombification", and included an "infected co-worker dispatch form" which would have allowed UF employees to explain their reasons for killing fellow staff and faculty members who had turned. The plan even went so far as to suggest that the human resources department should be reminded to stop salary payments to zombie employees.

The plan seemed to be solid and well researched,

with the potential to save lives, but when it was posted to the school's website on October 1st it was taken down the very next day. University of Florida spokesman Steve Orlando said the plan was removed because it "didn't really belong."

According to the Population Reference Bureau and a recent U.S. Census survey, Florida still leads the nation in percent of senior citizens per state with 17.6% of the population over age 65. This makes Florida one of the most dangerous places to be during a zombie outbreak, as senior citizens have statistically weaker immune systems, lower mobility and shorter life spans than anyone else. Hospitals, rest homes and elderly communities

are among the easiest targets for the undead.

Despite these horrifying facts, the University of Florida seems to think that zombie preparedness is a joke, while "cold protection and chilling damage" still holds a spot on their site's preparedness list. It would seem that protecting blueberries from freezing in a tropical climate is more important to them than protecting students and faculty from being devoured by hordes of undead monsters.

As a side note, the elderly in Pennsylvania make up 15.6% of the state's population, putting us in second place behind Florida. Perhaps Penn State should follow Doug Johnson's lead and come up with its own plan to raise awareness about the serious dangers of living dead. Singing "Zombie Nation" in Beaver Stadium is a good start, but we can do better.



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