

## A message from the Counseling Center regarding H1N1:

Public health concerns, such as pandemic flu, can lead to some level of anxiety in everyone. There is a natural increase in concern for one's health and the well-being of friends and family. Recognizing your own emotional reaction and managing it effectively will help you to be more successful at taking care of yourself and being a helpful resource for people around you.

### Fear and Anxiety

Anxiety is related to fear of the unknown. It is normal to feel anxious and worried about a spreading disease. Coping with your feelings during times of uncertainty can be challenging, but it is important to remember that *you are not alone*.

### All people will react in their own way.

Normal reactions include:

Physical	Emotional	Mental	Behavioral
Headaches, Tiredness	Panic, Anxiety	Trouble Concentrating	Avoiding others
Fast pulse, high blood pressure	Distrust, fear	Problems with work or school	Increased substance abuse
Changes in appetite	Anger, irritability	Memory problems	Excessive cleaning or washing
Unexplained aches or pains	Sadness, depression	Troubling thoughts that won't go away	Being overly cautious, jumpiness
Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much	Blame	Concern about health issues	
	Feeling overwhelmed		
	Increased stress		

### Here are some ways you can cope with stress and anxiety:

- Limit your exposure to graphic news stories
- Get accurate, timely information from reliable sources
  - UCF Health Center, <http://www.ucf.edu/flu>
  - UCF News & Information, <http://www.news.ucf.edu>
- Educate yourself on how you can best stay healthy and protect yourself from disease
- Maintain your normal daily routine to the extent possible
- Exercise, eat well, and rest
- Stay active—physically and mentally
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Find comfort in your spiritual and personal beliefs
- Keep a sense of humor, watch a funny movie, read a relaxing book
- Find healthy ways to express your feelings, such as journaling, talking, movement or crying

### Additional Resources:

<http://www.counseling.sdes.ucf.edu>

## **Stay Connected**

Fear and anxiety can lead to some level of isolation. It may make you want to stay away from family and friends to avoid getting sick. By following recommendations regarding how to stay healthy and prevent the spread of flu, you can protect yourself and your loved ones. Stay connected by phone, e-mail or social media with your support system. Remember, you need each other when there is a heightened concern about everyone's well-being.

If you are anxious about a health risk, talk with someone who can help. This may be a doctor or mental health professional at the UCF Health Center or Counseling Center or in your home community, a family member, a friend or a clergy member. If you notice a big change in a loved one, friend or co-worker, reach out to them. Make some time to talk. Watching out for others shows that you care. It can be comforting to both of you. If you or someone you know is having a hard time managing emotions, seek help from a medical or mental health professional.

## **Get Reliable Information**

When we face uncertainty about health risks, it is important to get reliable information. You can find accurate, up-to-date information about the H1N1 virus at the following Web sites:

<http://www.ucf.edu/flu>

<http://flu.gov/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>