What Can I Do to Protect Myself From Getting Sick?

Major world health organizations, including the CDC, recommend practicing good hygiene, which includes hand-washing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, to help prevent the spread of germs. Follow these everyday steps to protect your health:

• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If you don’t have a tissue, cover with your sleeve.
• Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective; however wash your hands with soap and water whenever possible.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
• Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
• Stay home until your fever is gone for 24 hours (without being on fever reducing medicines). This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
• Other recommendations include a general, good hygiene approach:
  o Maintain a clean environment by cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
  o Avoid sharing food and drink.

H1N1 (Swine) and Seasonal Flu Self-Care Information

Here are some tips for caring for yourself when you have the flu:

• Self-isolate (i.e., stay away from others) in your room or home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities (fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine).
• If you live in group housing such as a residence hall, Greek house or co-op, go home for a few days, if you can reasonably do that, until you are well.
• If you must leave your home or dorm room, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. A surgical mask can be helpful, but a tissue or other covering is also appropriate.
• Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever, headache, body aches. Use cough syrup or lozenges as needed.
• Stay well hydrated by drinking enough water.
• Let a friend/family member know you are ill and have them check in with you periodically.
• If you have severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe or persistent vomiting, rash, flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough, you should seek medical attention.
• Contact your professors to let them know of your illness. Student Health Services does not issue medical excuses for missing classes due to illness.
• Contact Student Health Services by telephone (541-737-9355) if you have questions or are feeling worse. If SHS is closed you should go to the nearest Urgent Care facility or emergency room.