

# Letter from the Office of Community Relations

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

As the new school year begins, health officials are warning of a possibly severe upcoming flu season. In addition to the seasonal flu, they expect the number of H1N1 cases to substantially increase. Here is the latest information we have on the H1N1 virus and flu season:

**H1N1 Vaccination:** The earliest the federal government expects to start distributing an H1N1 vaccine is October 2009. Depending on how much can be produced in a short amount of time, supplies of the vaccine may initially be limited. Pregnant women, caregivers of infants less than 6 months old, and medical personnel will be given a priority. After that, individuals older than 6 months up to the age of 24 – including most college-age students – and those 25 to 64 with health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza will have a priority to receive the vaccine. The vaccine will be voluntary. It is not known yet where the flu shots will be available, but the college is in touch with state, county and local health authorities and will provide more information as it becomes known.

**Seasonal Flu Shots:** Apart from the H1N1 vaccination, individuals are advised to get a regular flu shot to protect themselves from seasonal flu. It is recommended that individuals get their seasonal flu shot as soon as possible. For help in locating a seasonal flu clinic near you, go to [www.findaflushot.com](http://www.findaflushot.com)

**Prevention:** The best way to protect yourself and others from both the H1N1 virus and the seasonal flu is to take steps to prevent the spread of germs. These include frequent hand-washing and staying at home if you have flu symptoms. To learn about flu symptoms, go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or to the HealthWatch Web link on [www.bergen.edu](http://www.bergen.edu). For general information on the flu, visit Health Services in Room HS-100. **Email:** [healthservices@bergen.edu](mailto:healthservices@bergen.edu) **Phone: 201-447-9257**

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