

25 September 2009

To all Hokkaido University students and staff

Hokkaido University Infection Control Committee (Chair: Hemmi Masaaki)

University countermeasures against increase in cases of A influenza (H1N1)

Recent surveys suggest that influenza infection has now entered a peak season. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare envisages that 20% (maximum 30%) of the total Japanese population will develop symptoms of A influenza, with higher figures possible in urban areas. A figure of 50% is seen as possible if cases of extremely mild infection, with few symptoms, are included.

With the second semester due to begin in October, there is a risk of large-scale infection among students participating in lectures and research teams. In order to control and alleviate a surge in H1N1 widespread influenza infections, the University has adopted the countermeasures below. These measures replace the earlier advice of 7 August (University policy regarding type A influenza (H1N1)), which is now cancelled.

1. Reporting infection

Cancellation of lectures may be necessary for early identification of multiple infection in lectures and seminars and for prevention of further spread. Members of the University who are diagnosed as having contracted type A influenza are therefore urged to promptly notify their School or Faculty (weekdays, 8:30 – 17:00).

2. Receiving treatment at medical facilities

(1) In case of influenza-like symptoms

Members of the University who develop influenza-like symptoms such as fever (38 degrees and above) or cough should seek treatment promptly, after first arranging the time and method of treatment by telephone. Masks should be worn at the time of treatment in order to prevent the spread of infection.

(2) In case of fever (38 degrees and above) after arrival at the University

Members should suspect influenza infection and promptly wear a mask to prevent further spread. They should then seek immediate treatment as in (1) above.

(3) In case of mild symptoms and negative test (rapid screening) results

Since rapid screening tests may fail to give positive results in the first 12 hours after infection, it is desirable that members with fever or other symptoms refrain from attending the University. Where attendance is unavoidable, members should wear masks and make their contact with others as short as possible. Even on the day after receiving treatment, if members develop a fever (38 degrees and above) or cough etc, they should arrange further treatment and again undergo a rapid screening test.

3. Students with infection

(1) Suspension of attendance

Almost all current type A influenza is assumed to be H1N1. In consideration of the effects on other students, therefore, the University hereby suspends the attendance of students diagnosed with type A influenza under Section 19 of the Schools Health and Safety Act.

(2) Period of suspension

Until two further days with normal temperature after the abatement of fever.

(3) Treatment of suspension

The University will take due care to ensure that students who miss classes due to suspended attendance are not disadvantaged by being treated as absent.

4. Staff with infection

(1) Suspension of work

Almost all current type A influenza is assumed to be H1N1. In consideration of the effects on students and other staff, therefore, the University hereby suspends the attendance at work of staff members diagnosed with type A influenza, as provided under working regulations.

(2) Period of suspension

Until two further days with normal temperature after the abatement of fever.

5. Family members etc with infection

(1) Reporting to the University

At the present time it is not necessary to report cases of infection of co-residing family

members etc to the University.

(2) Countermeasures

Due to close contact, the risk of secondary infection from co-residents is high, and members of the University are asked to observe the following countermeasures.

- i) During the period from the date of confirmed infection of the co-resident until seven days after the abatement of fever, members should monitor their health daily every morning and evening. If they develop influenza-like symptoms such as fever or cough they should seek treatment promptly from their nearest medical facility, after first arranging the time and method of treatment by telephone.
- ii) Even where no symptoms are present, during the period from the date of confirmed infection of the co-resident until seven days after the abatement of fever, members should wear masks and otherwise show due consideration to others when attending the University.

6. Reporting infection in University clubs and circles

Countermeasures are required for early identification of group infection and for prevention of further spread. Where cases of infection are confirmed among students belonging to official University clubs and circles arising from group activities such as sporting events, training camps etc, student representatives should promptly notify the Student Support Section (Gakusei Shienka) in Student Affairs.

7. Residents of International House

In order to prevent spread among other residents, residents of International House who are infected should notify the office of International House in addition to reporting to their School or Faculty.

8. Preventative measures

(1) General preventative measures

Members should carefully observe the general measures of gargling, hand-washing and coughing etiquette.

(2) Early diagnosis and treatment of members with underlying medical conditions

H1N1 influenza can become serious in pregnant women and people with underlying medical conditions: respiratory diseases (including asthma), heart conditions (excluding

high blood pressure), impaired kidney or liver function, neurological disorders, neuromuscular diseases, blood disorders, metabolic disorders (including diabetes), suppressed immunity. Students and staff with these conditions should carefully monitor their health and, in the event of developing symptoms such as fever or cough, should seek treatment promptly at their nearest medical facility, after first arranging the time and method of treatment by telephone.

9. In case of cancellation of lectures

When lectures were cancelled under similar circumstances during the measles outbreak in 2007-8, many students failed to stay home, with the result that the measure was less than effective. In light of this experience, if lectures are cancelled in order to prevent the spread of infection, students are urged to avoid crowded places and to stay home as far as possible.

10. Checking the University homepage

We will continue to update information on Type A influenza on the Hokkaido University homepage (including the mobile phone site), and members are asked to check this on a daily basis.

11. Related information

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Homepage

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/kenkou/kekaku-kansenshou04/index.html>

Hokkaido Prefecture Homepage

<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/hf/kas/singatainfulpage.htm>

Sapporo City Homepage

<http://www.city.sapporo.jp/city/influ/>