

Take Simple Precautions to Stay Healthy During Your Travels

Pay attention to your health before traveling –The best way to prevent the spread of the flu is to stay home if you're sick or have flu-like symptoms. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends you get both H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines.

Practice good hygiene while traveling – Avoid people who are ill; wash your hands frequently with warm, soapy water or hand sanitizer and avoid touching your face; sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands.

Take precautions during air travel – If sitting within two rows of someone with respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, congested), point the air vent toward the ill person, especially if they are sitting next to or directly in front or back of you. Pivot your body away from the ill person; also, you could ask the flight attendant to offer the ill person a mask to wear during the flight.

When traveling through airports, train or bus stations – Try not to touch the handrails on stairs or escalators unless necessary. If you touch such surfaces, try to keep your hands away from your face and wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. This advice also applies after touching the handles of water fountains or ATMs and food dispensers.

Some should consider canceling travel plans – Consider canceling travel plans if anyone in your group already is sick. Also, individuals in high-risk groups, such as the elderly, children under the age of 5, pregnant women or those with compromised immune systems might want to reconsider their travel plans.

If you get sick after arrival – If you have reached your destination and then experience flu symptoms, remain in your accommodations, except for necessary medical care, for at least 24 hours past the time your fever has remained normal without the use of fever-reducing medications.

The CDC has launched its largest-ever public awareness campaign in regard to staying healthy while traveling. For more information about the CDC Travelers' Health campaign, please visit: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/novel-h1n1-flu.aspx>

Updates on the H1N1 flu virus at the UA can be found at:
http://cert.arizona.edu/h1n1_news.html