

Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Information

Issue No. 1

August 20, 2009

Every member of the Vanier community is getting ready for a semester of intense work, as usual. What is less usual is that as new students or returning ones, staff or faculty, we also have to get ready for the potentially very disruptive impact of the A (H1N1) influenza virus. Every day this semester, more than 6,000 students and hundreds of visitors and workers will walk the hallways, congregate in classrooms, cafeterias, labs, and study areas. This offers the virus increased opportunity for transmission from individual to individual. This is why Public Health officials fear that with the end of vacation time there will be a new wave of this pandemic.

So far the virus has been causing mostly benign symptoms for most of those affected by it. Still it can and does kill certain individuals and it is feared that as it affects larger numbers, it might have a chance to mutate into something more dangerous.

Vanier College staff have measures in place to help reduce the transmission of the virus and thus help protect all members of our community:

- As simple as it appears to be, frequent hand-washing with soap or sanitization using alcohol-based (60% -90%) gel with emollients is actually the most effective way to reduce the spread of the majority of infectious diseases.
- Alcohol-based gel dispensers have been installed at all entrances and key locations. Everyone should use them to get rid of viruses picked up at home or on the way here, or while at Vanier.
- Communications such as this one will be issued as often as needed to advise you of adaptations and changes, according to how the situation evolves and what recommendations come from Public Health authorities.
- New procedures are being adopted regarding the cleaning and disinfection of key areas

All members of the Vanier College community need to do their part if we want to reduce risks:

- Learn and practice “respiratory etiquette” (coughing/sneezing on one’s shoulder or in one’s elbow instead of one’s hand, disposing of used paper tissues promptly and properly after use, and minimizing casual physical contact such as handshakes and hugs).
- Know and understand the government’s recommendations. Regularly visit the official website www.pandemiequebec.gouv.qc.ca to be well informed of the latest news and guidelines. You can also obtain more information and recommendations by visiting the nurse in Health Services (C203).

If you are pregnant, or suspect you are pregnant, please consult your physician and follow their advice.

If during the semester you develop flu-like symptoms, please don’t come to the College without having first consulted the document: [Decision Chart: Protecting Yourself, Protecting Others](#) OR having contacted Info Santé, (open 24 hours a day by simply dialling 811). You might be told to stay home until the end of the contagious period. If so, as a Vanier College student or staff member, or College contract employee, email info@vaniercollege.qc.ca or telephone 514-380-8128 to report your illness and for directives on what to do at the end of the contagious period. **Respect the prescribed quarantine period.**

Vanier will remain in contact with Public Health authorities and will keep you informed through further updates.