

## H1V1 UPDATE

*Last updated on 29 December 2009*

KEI's Health Safety Committee has been monitoring the development of the H1N1 virus (swine flu), both domestically and abroad. Our decisions are guided by the advice of the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and the US Department of State.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has raised its alert level to Phase 6, which designates "a global pandemic is underway." It is important to note that "WHO's decision to raise the pandemic alert level to Phase 6 is a reflection of the spread of the virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus." For a complete WHO report and recommendations visit <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/>.

### Travel

The World Health Organization is not recommending restricting travel due to the outbreak of the H1N1 virus ([http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/public\\_health/travel\\_advice/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/public_health/travel_advice/en/index.html)). According to the US Department of State, those going abroad may encounter travel delays, such as health screenings at airports (<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/content/id/1194.aspx>).

### Vaccine

The Center for Disease Control (<http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1FLU/>) recommends that individuals in the following categories consider the H1N1 vaccine, which should be available in the Fall of 2009. Please note that the list below has been modified by KEI for relevance to study abroad. Students should consult with their physician about being vaccinated.

- Persons 19 through 24 years of age;
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza;
- Students planning to work (intern or volunteer) with children younger than 6 months of age because younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated;
- Students planning to participate in a clinical internship.

### Staying Healthy

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- If you get sick, stay home from school and limit your contact with others.
- If you have sudden onset of flu like symptoms, call the KEI Onsite Director and health care provider in the host country.

### Additional Resources

- FAQ on the H1N1 virus that is geared specifically towards citizens abroad ([http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_4494.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_4494.html))
- CDC FAQ and recommendations ([http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/swineflu\\_you.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/swineflu_you.htm))
- ECDC: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (<http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/>)
- SEARO: WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (<http://www.searo.who.int/>)

Please feel free to contact a KEI advisor should you have questions. As the situation develops and changes, we will post updates to this page and communicate with students via e-mail.