View From The Hill
(9/17/09)

H1N1 - WKU

Concerns about H-1-N-1 are widespread among every age group …including on college campuses.

In this week’s “View from the Hill”,   Amy Bingham looks at how WKU has prepared for the illness and what you can do to keep from getting it.

If you’ve been sick lately,  you’re not alone.   Sinus infections, strep throat, bronchitis and yes the flu (both regular and H1N1) ..are all out there.

The first sign of illness begs the question—do I have the so-called swine flu?

Dr. Allen Redden \ WKU Health Services

WKU Health Services has been a busy place already this semester….but it’s not all attributed to H1N1.

“We’ve seen a fair number of cases and it’s been like our regular flu season as far as numbers go …it’s just a lot earlier and associated with things we usually see when kids come back in the fall.”

Dr. Allen Redden says WKU has been preparing for a pandemic influenza outbreak for the past five years.

“When HINI showed up in the spring, we weren’t surprised and it turned out it was not quite as bad as what we had prepared for.”

What health officials had prepared for was the Avian flu—a much more serious strain…but Dr. Redden says H1N1 is actually milder than the seasonal flu.

“A lot of people don’t even need specific treatment, just treatment for specific symptoms like coughing and runny nose…the ones who are sicker or have an underlying chronic condition we prescribe tamiflu.”

Dr. Redden says when it comes to the flu… prevention is key…which is why reminders are everywhere…. to keep germs from spreading.

“Proper hygiene, make sure you are isolated if you are ill, avoid others, cover your cough, use hand sanitizer and when the vaccine comes in, get vaccinated if you are in one of the high risk groups.”

The “H1N1” vaccination is expected to arrive in mid-October and people aged 6 months through 24 years are encouraged to get it.

Meanwhile, the “seasonal” flu vaccine just arrived on campus yesterday and will be administered tomorrow and Monday until one pm.

For the latest information on WKU’s response to H1NI …go to [www.wku.edu\healthservices](http://www.wku.edu/healthservices).

With this week’s “View from the Hill”…I’m Amy Bingham.