Infectious Disease Precautions

What do SARS, influenza and the common cold have in common? Each of these diseases is caused by viruses. The viruses are spread by respiratory droplets and contact with items that are contaminated by these droplets.

Most of us have experienced having a cold or flu and are reasonably comfortable managing the illness. Emerging diseases cause worldwide medical and social concern as we prepare for the possibility of a pandemic. Recently, we have faced SARS and are now concerned about avian flu leaving the bird population and mutating into a human-to-human transmissible illness. If this happens, there is a possibility for pandemic influenza that could infect 25% of the population before a vaccine can be developed.

A few simple measures will significantly reduce your risk of catching these respiratory diseases:

1. Frequently and thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water, and then thoroughly dry with a paper towel or warm air dryer. Thorough washing should take at least 30 seconds, and include washing both sides of your hands, between the fingers and around the fingernails. Viruses are particles and will wash away just like dirt. They also need moist surfaces to survive, so the drying is important. Because viruses enter the body at mucous membranes, hand washing before eating, touching your face, eyes, or nose is particularly important.

2. Avoid close contact with people who are sneezing or coughing. Sneezed droplets will easily travel 5' in air at 100 mph.

3. Frequently clean items that are regularly touched, such as doorknobs and telephones. Frequently touched surfaces in public areas at UCAR facilities are sanitized each evening by the custodial staff. Employees are responsible for the cleanliness of individual workspaces.

4. Get an annual flu shot.

5. Review health information at the SaSS or Centers for Disease Control Web sites, and follow recommended precautions while traveling.

A few simple measures will significantly reduce your chance of spreading these viruses if you are ill, or becoming ill.

1. Stay at home, or promptly go home if you have a fever. Fever is defined as a core body temperature of 100.4 degrees F. or 38 degrees C.

2. Practice droplet etiquette – catch your sneezes and coughs in a tissue (then throw it away and wash your hands) or in the crook of your elbow. Avoid coughing or sneezing into your bare hands as they will touch lots of surfaces before you can wash them.

Additional information may be found at the following Website:
Center for Disease Control Flu Site: www.cdc.gov/flu/

Upcoming Flu Shot Clinics:

**November**
- **Tuesday 4th:** 9:00am—11:30am ML Damon Room
- **Wednesday 12th:** 9:00am—11:30am CG1 South Auditorium
- **Tuesday 18th:** 9:00am—11:30am FL Café Atrium

**December**
- **Tuesday 2nd:** 10:00am—11:30am Jeffco

UCAR Wellness Website: www.fin.ucar.edu/wellness/fluvaccine.html

Did You Know?
Outside the cafeterias at Mesa Lab, Foothills Lab and Center Green are liquid hand sanitizer dispensers.

Upcoming Safety Classes:

- **10-23-2008**
  - **Back Safety** 1:30pm - 3:30pm CG1 2126

- **10-24-2008**
  - **Hazard Communication** 9:00am - 10:30am FL2 1003
  - **Confined Space** 11:30am - 12:30pm FL2 1003
  - **Hot Operations** 1:30pm - 2:30pm FL2 1003

- **11-11-2008**
  - **CPR Certification (MERT/Field Campaign Staff Only)** 10:00am - 5:00pm CG1 2126

- **12-04-2008**
  - **Workplace Harassment Awareness** 10:00am - 12:00pm FL2 Main Seminar

Register @:
HR website: www.fin.ucar.edu/hr/staff_dev/index.html or by calling Jan Wilmesmeier x8713.

Comments, questions, suggestions may be directed to Bob Wiley @ x8554 or rwiley@ucar.edu