



More swine flu at Georgia colleges

By [Laura Diamond](#)

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Officials at Georgia's colleges are telling students and parents not to panic as the schools report hundreds of confirmed or suspected cases of swine flu.

Georgia's colleges have the highest number of voluntarily reported swine flu cases in the nation, according to the American College Health Association. The organization is collecting weekly data on the illness, and colleges can choose to participate in the survey.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that Georgia and Alaska are the two states where swine flu has become widespread.

The number of cases is fluid, and local college leaders expect an uptick after activities that attract a lot of people, such as the first home football game and homecoming.

Michael Huey, executive director of Emory's student health and counseling services, said the campus has had more than 220 cases. He sent a note to students and parents Thursday afternoon updating them on the situation.

"This isn't theoretical anymore, it's here on campus," Huey said Friday.

He said infected students are doing well and that the illness is behaving like seasonal flu.

Georgia Tech has had more than 200 students with flulike symptoms. The University of Georgia reported about 300 confirmed or suspected cases of swine flu.

"We've been swamped," said Liz Rachun, UGA's health communications coordinator. "We're seeing similar numbers to what we normally see in February during a heavy flu season."

Rachun said parents need to understand college students often get sick at the start of the school year, which began at UGA on Aug. 17.

The university enrolls about 34,000 students, and the reported cases are just a portion of the picture, Rachun said.

“Many students are not needing to come to the health center because their symptoms are mild and they’re staying in their dorm rooms for a few days,” she said. “Some are going home to recuperate.”

In the letter Emory sent to students and parents, Huey wrote most people with the disease will have mild symptoms and will not require medical treatment.

The Emory Clinic plans to begin a flu screening clinic Saturday. Huey said the student health service is scheduled to begin seasonal flu vaccinations Tuesday. A swine flu vaccine is expected in October.

To limit the spread of swine flu, Emory has encouraged students to go home or off campus to recover.

If that’s not possible, students can move out of their regular dorm rooms and relocate to Turman South, a dorm with about 100 beds. Students who decide to stay there don’t attend class and the college delivers food to them.

About 45 students are currently in Turman South and the typical stay has been two or three days, Huey said.

The first students moved there Aug. 25 — just three days after freshmen arrived on campus and two days before the start of the fall semester, spokeswoman Elaine Justice said.

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