

Lessons from Nature: H1N1 isn't just for pigs anymore

by Ryan Fiffick
Contributor

Novel H1N1 virus...you may know it as "swine flu" but I have grown to affectionately refer to it as "Hi-Ni"...is all the craze amongst hypochondriacs and virologists. With sixty plus reported cases at Western Carolina University and our own staff here at Brevard College ramping up their defenses (and so yours, my fellow students) you may be wondering, "Am I going to catch swine flu and die?" Chances are, no, you won't. I'm not a medical professional and I would just as soon leave diagnoses and epidemiology to the professionals (Like Susan Martin, R.N. in the counseling building between the Jones residence hall and the Dunham center—she's an awesome human being who loves to help people) but at this point we are at a greater risk of suffering an untimely death by simply getting in a car and driving to Ingles (you

should walk). Why is the media making such a craze of H1N1? Ratings. Why are we treating H1N1 like it's the newest pandemic? Because it is. Why should we care? Don't your thinking caps boys and girls, this week's column will tell you.

As the CDC tells us, "This virus was originally referred to as "swine flu" because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs (swine) in North America. But further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia and bird (avian) genes and human genes. Scientists call this a "quadruple reassortant" virus. Skipping the grittier details of intercellular viral DNA swapping, quadruple reassortant virus means that either a new strain of influenza has evolved from other strains that both do and do not infect human or that an older strain of influenza, one that swept through a previous generation has re-emerged.

H1N1 seems to not infect people over 60 years of age, which tells me that sextagenarians have been exposed to something similar and have the antibodies to combat the infection.

To protect yourself, USE COMMON SENSE: wash your hands with anti-microbial soap and hot water before touching your food or your face, don't French-kiss anyone who's showing symptoms of illness, get plenty of rest, eat healthily and get Flu vaccines every season. To protect other people, USE COMMON SENSE: if you're sick on campus, contact Nurse Martin, she'll help you. If you're sick off campus, stay at home, don't become a viral vector like Typhoid Mary. Give me a call too, I'll come hang out with you. I WANT to catch H1N1 so that I will develop the antibodies to fight off the NEXT mutation of the virus. There's no guarantee of course, but Mother Nature loves to cook up nasty little bugs to keep runaway populations under control and I'll take my chances with one that doesn't have a 90% kill rate, knowing that the next one may.

Marijuana found in Green Hall

by Richard Bush
Staff Writer

It is no secret that marijuana is being smoked on college campuses nationwide, but is it a problem here at Brevard College???

The night of August 31st marked our first incident of someone being caught smoking marijuana here on campus.

Even though there is no smoking of any kind allowed in the dorms, students still try to see if they can get away with it. One way or another they eventually get caught.

Local police was called to green hall due to marijuana being smoked in one of the dorm rooms. The problem came when there was no one in the room by the time

the officers arrived.

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That caused for more officers to be called to the scene to help locate the resident of the room. Squad cars patrolled and roamed

around the campus until they eventually caught up with the student.

No college will be able to completely stop marijuana from being smoked on campus, but students can do something about it. Be aware of the rules and regulations and smart about the habits you choose and where they take place.

**A STORM IS
COMING.**

**GET TO THE
BUNKER.**

