

LA NAHN CONNEXION

President's Message

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Special points of interest:

- SWINE FLU: What to know.
- My first National Conference: by Dianne Alvarado
- Scholarship Gala December 18, 2009 @ the Westin, Pasadena. More info inside.



Happy fall to all, I hope you all had a great summer. As you get back in the school routine either for you or your kids, we all have lots to consider and think about the rest of this year. Goblins and ghosts aren't the only spooky things you will encounter this fall.

We need to think about how we will make sure that all of our loved ones get vaccinated, before the flu season

hits. On that note, what about our own healthcare? As nurses in America we need be educated on what Healthcare reform will mean to all citizens. You need to get involved by attending rallies, writing letters, calling your congressman.

I also think about how difficult it is getting into nursing school and the challenges to find your first job. That is why I am part of NAHN. There is a lot of work to be done and that's what keeps me going. We need to make sure we continue to help our community grow and stay healthy. Let's help direct our young people to a path of success. Who knows maybe that will lead to the road of NURSING.

Please help us con-

tinue this much needed work, and join us at our annual Scholarship Dinner Dance gala, on December 18, 2009, at the Westin in Pasadena. This is where we will begin our goal to restructure our community, through students. This is where nursing students will gain not only acknowledgement but money to continue their career in nursing.

Here's wishing you a Happy and safe Halloween!
Angie Milan, RN, MSN



H1N1 influenza, or "swine flu" season is here! Do you know the facts?

What is swine flu?

Generally, swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs.

As of April 2009, "swine flu" has come to refer to a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in April 2009 in the United States. Other countries, including Mexico and Canada, have reported people sick with this new virus. This virus is spreading from person to person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

What makes the transmission of swine flu more rapid

than seasonal flu? All forms of influenza that are transmitted person to person are highly contagious. Every year in the United States, on average 5 percent to 20 percent of the population gets the flu. However, in the United States many people get vaccinated against seasonal flu, which results in a slower rate of transmission around the nation. It is not clear yet how rapidly H1N1 is transmitted.

Is swine flu more dangerous than seasonal flu? Like seasonal flu, swine flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Al-



though the vast majority of people who get seasonal flu do recover fully, each year in the United States more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and about 36,000 people die from flu-

related causes.

Deaths from seasonal influenza are usually among those at age extremes — the elderly and the very young. This is often because of weakened immune systems and other conditions. Many people who die from the flu actually die from secondary pneumonia or another con-

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Staying Well: Take Steps to Reduce Your Risk or Find Breast Cancer Early

By Sylvia S. Estrada, RNC, WHCNP, CBCN, MSN, MSHCM, BSN

Since 1990, more and more women have been surviving breast cancer, largely because of early detection through mammograms and improvements in treatment.

The American Cancer Society recommends yearly mammograms for women 40 and older. Women at high

risk for the disease should get an MRI every year, along with their mammogram. Your doctor can help you determine if you're at high risk for breast cancer.

Doctors estimate that mammograms could save thousands of lives each year. Although mammograms are

the best defense against breast cancer, American Cancer Society research shows that many women still aren't getting screened or are waiting too long between mammograms. If

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My Nursing Experience

By: Jennifer Yanez B.A., R.N.

I have been a nurse for two years and still remember my first day of nursing school. For those of you that are just starting or have been a nurse for many years now, a nursing student's reality when stepping into the first class of the year may go a little like this... The professor states that the class is already five chapters behind

and the first midterm is two weeks away and that was only one class of four that I was registered for that quarter. I realized quickly I could not learn all of this material on my own, so I started to look for a study group.

In regards to studying: It is unfortunate that the word studying cannot convey the amounts of information you

must know because one day a person's life may depend on it. So when you feel like life may be passing you by remember nursing is a calling not a sentence. In the years that it will take you to become a nurse you will eat, sleep, and even dream about nursing. You will also

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dition. However, with the current H1N1 influenza strain, it is too early to know who is most at risk and if this new strain is more dangerous.

Is it possible this flu will return in flu season?

Yes, this is certainly possible. During the flu pandemic of 1918, cases began in the

spring and then faded away during the summer, only to come back with a vengeance in the fall and winter. Therefore we should be prepared for a potential return of H1N1 this fall and winter either as a manifestation of the annual seasonal flu we always get, or in addition to it.

Why does this strain have the ability to spread beyond the typical months (October to April) of the flu season? In the Northern Hemisphere, winter is the time for flu. In the United States, flu season can range from November to as late as May, encompassing parts of fall, winter and

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you're putting off getting your mammogram because you're scared or nervous, talk to someone who has had their mammogram done.

And don't forget that in addition to getting a yearly mam-

mogram, there are other important steps you can take to reduce your risk of breast cancer. Since 1990, more and more women have been surviving breast cancer, largely because of early detection through mammo-

grams and improvements in treatment.

The American Cancer Society recommends yearly mammograms for women 40 and older. Women at high

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My First National Nurses Conference

By Diana Alvarado, RN Student Nurse

It was July 19th, 2009 and I was flying to San Antonio, Texas for the NAHN national nurses conference with my mentor Sylvia Estrada. Since it was the first time I traveled without any family it was extremely nerve wracking waiting for the airplane to depart.

Upon arrival at the hotel the ambiance was very relaxing and welcoming. The action didn't start until the 21st of July with the pre-conference. This day I found it to be very helpful for us the attending students for the reason that a class for NCLEX test taking skills was taught by Ms Lau-

rie Singel, a professor from the University of the Incarnate Word. From this point on the conference evolved into a huge source of information and encouragement for us Hispanics to persuade the health care profession,

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spring. But during summer, if you think you have the flu it is most likely another type of respiratory illness. However, it's not impossible to catch flu in the summer, though, and travel is often the culprit. While the flu season is associated with the winter months, remember that in the Southern Hemisphere, winter is from April through September — and so is flu season. And in the tropics, you could be at risk of flu year round because there is no defined flu season.

Is swine flu more deadly than other flu if not treated? Thus far, in the United States the current influenza outbreak has not been deadly.

The vast majority of the people infected with H1N1 have only been moderately ill. What is the role of pig farms in this outbreak?

At this point, it is still unknown exactly how, when or where the disease originated. Many possibilities exist for how the virus jumped to humans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has not found any evidence to indicate that any of the illnesses resulted from contact with pigs.

The disease is not spread by eating pork.

What is the difference between "H1N1 influenza" and "swine flu?"

There are many different

types of swine flu. Some of which are H1N2, H3N2 and H3N1. The term H1N1 identifies the makeup of this particular virus, and the use of this term in comparison to "swine flu" ensures accuracy as each particular virus is different. Additionally, it has not been found in the United States that anyone infected with the virus contracted it directly from swine. Use of the term "swine flu" can mislead people to think that humans can contract swine flu from eating pork, which they can't. Serious symptoms

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rec-

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go through a phase of self-diagnosis and believe you have some type of endocrine disease and to top it all off you also have borderline personality disorders. Your close friends and family members will eventually surrender and allow you to practice your assessments of lung, heart, and abdominal sounds on them in order for

you to feel comfortable and somewhat competent when you step into the hospital to take care of your first patient. This is why those who you surround yourself with are vital to your survival and sanity in getting through the boot camp of nursing school. I thought getting into nursing school was the end of my quest, but I was sorely mis-

taken, it was the beginning of a non-stop, caffeine charged rollercoaster that I still have not recovered from. Getting here is only the beginning, you will find yourself having to be assertive to ensure that you are receiving all the information you need in order to not

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and awareness of the obstacles that we face as a minority race who soon will become a majority. Day after day the conference offered a variety of workshops that was beneficial at all educa-

tional levels; these categories included: "Education Excellence", "Practice/Clinical Experience", and "Research Excellence".

Throughout the conference

I had the chance to meet and network with people that came not only from Los Angeles but from New York, Arizona, Florida among

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risk for the disease should get an MRI every year, along with their mammogram. Your doctor can help you determine if you're at high risk for breast cancer.

Doctors estimate that mammograms could save thousands of lives each year. Although mammograms are

the best defense against breast cancer, American Cancer Society research shows that many women still aren't getting screened or are waiting too long between mammograms. If you're putting off getting your mammogram because you're scared or nervous, talk to someone who has had

their mammogram done.

And don't forget that in addition to getting a yearly mammogram, there are other important steps you can take to reduce your risk of breast cancer and stay well:

- Eat a healthy diet to help

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ommends that you go immediately to your doctor or local emergency room if you or your children experience any of the following serious symptoms:

-- *Serious symptoms in children:*

- Trouble breathing (for example, fast breathing or gasping for air)
- Bluish skin color
- Not wanting to drink fluids
- Not waking up or being unusually tired
- A child not wanting to be held or touched
- Flu-like symptoms that get better, but then come back with fever and severe cough
- Any fever with a rash

-- *Serious symptoms in adults:*

- Trouble breathing (for example, fast breathing or gasping for air)
- Pain or pressure in the

chest or abdomen

- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or non-stop vomiting

Above all, do not panic. Stay calm, take the preventive steps listed above and seek treatment as soon as possible if you feel sick. These are the keys to protecting yourself and your loved ones from H1N1 flu.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

If you live in areas where cases have been identified and develop flu-like symptoms (fever, aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea) you may want to contact your health care provider. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed. If you are sick, you

should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

Can eating pork cause swine flu?

Swine flu cannot be transmitted by eating pork or pork products. According to CDC, cooking pork at 160°F kills viruses, including swine flu. [

What is the comparison to avian flu, in terms of its severity and also in terms of how easily each spreads? The risk from avian influenza is generally low for most people, because the viruses do not usually infect humans. However, confirmed cases of human infection from several subtypes of avian influenza infection have been reported since 1997. Most

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other states. The keynote speakers as well as the presenters for the workshops were great and projected topics perfectly elaborated. However, the speech that mostly left an impression

was the speech by the sisters Carol & Carolyn Bloch. The Bloch sisters are highly educated and were recognized by one of the leading newspapers in the Hispanic community in Los Angeles as

the 2009 Mujer Destacada for the health category. They emphasized the importance of understanding the differences among the cultures

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especially with in our own. They also mentioned the need for us Hispanics to become united and supportive of each others careers and to become tolerant of the opinions of others.

The last day of the conference was Friday July the 24th. This day it was a half

day and a gala dinner was hosted to celebrate the culmination of a successful conference and to reward the scholarship recipients with their awards. It was a wonderful evening, where people got recognized and a total of 27 students, me included, were awarded with

a scholarship of one thousand dollars. On Saturday morning I was flying back to Los Angeles. On my flight back I realized I had almost twice as much encouragement and information to share with my fellow classmates, and best of all a wonderful experience.

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cases of avian influenza infection in humans have resulted from contact with infected poultry such as domesticated chicken, ducks and turkeys or surfaces contaminated with secretion/excretions from infected birds. The spread of avian influenza viruses from one ill person to another has been reported very rarely, and has been limited, inefficient and unsustainable. This differs greatly from the current H1N1 influenza strain that is being spread from person to person

If something like 36,000 people die from the flu in a normal year, why is this virus such a big deal?

A flu pandemic occurs when

a new flu virus emerges for which humans have little or no immunity and then spreads easily from person to person around the world. This is what is happening now. In the 20th century we had two mild flu pandemics, in 1968 and 1957, and the severe "Spanish flu" pandemic of 1918, which killed an estimated 40 million to 50 million people worldwide. This virus is a concern because it is a new strain of influenza for which people have not been vaccinated nor have an immunity. It contains genes from swine flu, avian flu and human flu, and much is still unknown about it. Because of how rapidly the virus has spread

around the world, health officials are taking precautions to keep people safe while they continue to learn more. What is the possibility it will mutate and become another pandemic next year? The influenza virus is notoriously unstable and changes rapidly. Since this is a new virus it is too early to tell. However, it does have the potential to mutate and become either more deadly or more benign.

Should I get vaccinated?

On July 29th, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended

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only get through school, but to succeed in becoming a good nurse.

A bit of advise: LEARN TO BE FLEXIBLE, realize that things are not going to run smoothly all the time. Now, I could go on and tell you all about the different experiences I went through during nursing school and yes I had a lot of laughs during that time. But I truly believe every nursing student needs a mentor: someone who has been through it all before and is willing to share his or her experiences. A good mentor is someone who

keeps tabs on you, gives you updates of scholarships, forwards the latest evidence-based

practice research articles for you to stay on top of, and is willing to receive frantic questions via email at all hours of the night.

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience which you must stop and look fear in the face... You must do things you think you cannot do.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

On a personal note: I want to remind you to continue

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that H1N1 vaccination efforts focus on the following five key populations:

- Pregnant women,
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age,
- Health care and emergency services personnel
- Persons between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age, and
- People from ages 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk of

complications from pandemic H1N1 flu infection because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.

These vaccination efforts are focused on reducing the impact and spread of pandemic H1N1 flu. The H1N1 vaccine is expected to arrive in Los Angeles County by about mid-October. The two-dose H1N1 vaccine will be distributed through normal providers, such as your doctor or some pharmacies and

workplaces, and through some public organizations, such as Public Health. While the H1N1 vaccine does require two visits to your vaccine provider, the benefits in terms of protecting your health and the health of your loved ones are well worth it. The seasonal flu vaccine will be made available through your usual doctor or health care provider.

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control your weight — being overweight or obese raises your risk, especially after menopause

- Get regular physical activity. The American Cancer Society recommends 30 minutes a day, 5 or more days a week, but 45-60 minutes per day is even better.

- Limit alcohol intake to no more than 1 drink per day for women (2 drinks per day for men)

ay well:



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working hard and making the sacrifices you have chosen to make in order to fulfill your dreams and aspirations. Being a nursing student is stressful and challenging, but in order to care for others you must first take care of yourself. So remember there is always time to squeeze in a workout, to make healthy eating choices, and to hug a loved one or call a friend because in the end they too will have

contributed to your success. Not only did I get through the challenges in my life with hard work, determination, and persistence; when times got really tough I always had words of wisdom surrounding me, such as a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt:

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience which you must stop and look fear in the face... You must do things you think you cannot do.”

Good luck to all the nursing students this year and those that are already nurses; when you see those white scrubs coming towards you remember you were there once so take the time to teach them how to be a good nurse.

ADVERTISEMENTS

“Full-time RN position available working on a cardiovascular disease prevention (healthy lifestyle promotion) research project involving promotoras and Latina women in Pacoima and Sun Valley; work site also includes UCLA. Must be bilingual with at least two years of nursing experience and skilled in health education; cardiovascular or public health nursing background preferred. Contact Juan Villegas at 310-794-4947.”

National Conference 2009

San Antonio, Texas





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National
Association of
Hispanic Nurses,
Los Angeles Chapter
Scholarship Awards
Dinner Dance

Friday, December 18, 2009

National Association of Hispanic Nurses, LA Chapter
P.O. Box 91714
City of Industry, CA 91715-1714

Please join us for this year's LA NAHN
2009

Scholarship Awards Dinner Dance!

WHEN: Friday, December 18, 2009

TIME: 6:00 p.m. Registration & Cocktail Reception

7:00 p.m. Dinner & Awards Ceremony

9:00 p.m. Dance ~ 12:00 am

LOCATION: Westin Hotel

191 North Los Robles

Pasadena, CA 91101

(626) 792-2727

FEATURING: - Music-DJ

- Mariachi & Ballet Folklórico Dancers

- Honorary Recognition and

Scholarship Awards!

- Delicious Steak and Seafood duet or

a vegetarian dinner upon request

COST: \$75 Non-members & Guests

\$65 LA NAHN Members (\$70 at door)

For more information please contact Diane Sanchez at

(562) 577-9184 or go to our website at lanahn.com for details.

(Fill out the following page, detach, and mail to the address provided)

Contact Name: _____ Title _____

Telephone: _____ Cell _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

By December 10th, Please reserve me:

_____ Ticket(s) at \$75.00 for Non-members & Guests

_____ Ticket(s) at \$65.00 for LA NAHN Members (\$70 at door)

_____ Total Amount Enclosed

Names of Attendees: _____

(Note: 8 seats to a table) _____

I am unable to attend, but enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____

To pay by Credit Card:

Visa _____ Mastercard _____ Discover _____ Amex _____

Account # _____ Expiration Date: _____

Card Holder Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Zip Code _____

For checks, please make payable to:

National Association of Hispanic Nurses, LA Chapter (NAHN/LA)

P.O. Box 91714

City of Industry, CA 91715-1714

National Association of Hispanic Nurses Los Angeles Chapter
P.O. Box 91714
City Of Industry, CA 91745
Phone (626) 533-1644

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