

# The Michigan Daily

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Ann Arbor, Michigan

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## Flu shots are 75 percent effective; causes of local outbreaks uncertain

### UHS

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around," said Mary Poskie, patient-care director at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor. "The strains we're seeing were not covered by the vaccine given."

Winfield said an increase in influenza exists despite flu shots because flu vaccinations are not a panacea for influenza.

They are "75 percent protective. No one knows why there will be a local epidemic when there is a local outbreak," he said, adding that "most students still do not get influenza vaccinations."

Social Work first-year student Susan Hubbard is one of the students Winfield was referring to. Despite not having the flu, Hubbard sat patiently in the Allergy Immunization Center at UHS as she awaited her flu vaccination.

She said she regretted not getting the vaccination earlier and added she was "worried about getting the flu, especially being around a lot of people."

But LSA sophomore Assuntina Sacco received the flu vaccination in October and does not have the flu. Sacco

indicated that she was glad she received the vaccination months ago because she knows if "there is an increase, you won't get the flu," she said.

Law third-year student Dan Ventrelle received the flu shot yesterday and said he is a "little uncertain about the effectiveness of the shot. I am hopeful that it will work but I'm not 100 percent confident."

Winfield recommended to those who have the flu not to attend class for the first five to seven days and to stay away from people who do not have the flu so not to expose them to the illness.

"The shot is not helpful if you already have the flu," Winfield said, but said he encourages flu sufferers to visit UHS "in the first 48 hours of influenza."

UHS offers the flu shot for \$10 but the clinic has a limited supply. "We have 200 more doses available," Winfield said.

Coble said she has learned from her experience this year and will take precautions next flu season by getting the flu vaccination.

"I'm going to take my medicine, sleep and drink lots of fluids," she said.

## Despite shots, flu epidemic not subsiding

By Shomari Terrelonge-Stone  
Daily Staff Reporter

LSA first-year student Lydia Coble said she felt sick this past weekend with a "dry cough, headache and body fatigue."

Yesterday, as she waited at University Health Services for a prescription to combat her flu — dressed in blue jeans, a black shirt and a black and blue winter coat — she said in a low octave, "I wish I got a flu shot so I wouldn't be sick."

Although Coble did not receive the flu vaccination several months ago, the shot may not have necessarily protected her from the illness this flu season.

UHS Interim Director Robert Winfield said as of yesterday, about 5.6 percent of the 3,000 people who received a flu shot from UHS between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31 have reported symptoms of the flu.

In comparison to previous years, Winfield said this percentage is small but added that the numbers also indicate that there is "a substantial number of people coming in for vaccinations."

As of yesterday, the University Hospitals were "85 percent full, which is pretty high," said Hospitals

spokesperson Kara Gavin.

"The emergency room is still taking about 50 percent more patients than normal with both the respiratory and intestinal forms of the flu," she said.

But why has the number of people with the influenza illness increased significantly if a "substantial number of people" received flu vaccinations?

"Even people who have got the flu shots are getting the flu. There are several strains of the flu going

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### Staying healthy

- Symptoms of the flu include high fever, cough, runny nose, headache, muscle aches and fatigue.
- The flu can be fatal if it develops into pneumonia. Every year, the flu causes about 20,000 deaths nationwide.
- In addition to flu shots, washing hands, getting enough sleep and eating healthy are steps to preventing the flu.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website