

A dose of H1N1: Will USF students get the shot?



P.R. Survey Research Project: December 1, 2009

The Researchers (left to right): Amy Dreyer, Lindsay Fitzgerald (seated), Joan Landquist, and Andrew DeLong (row two).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to create a survey of University of South Florida students that discovers the level of knowledge they possess about the H1N1 flu vaccination, to understand why they choose to receive or not receive the H1N1 vaccination, and ultimately, the survey hopes to change the attitudes USF students have about the H1N1 vaccination by convincing them the vaccination is safe and beneficial for their health.

OBJECTIVES

Our chief objectives with this study were:

1. To determine the level of knowledge that USF students have about the H1N1 flu vaccination.
2. Alter University of South Florida student's opinions about the H1N1 vaccination.
3. Convince University of South Florida students to receive the H1N1 flu vaccination in order to protect their health.

METHODOLOGY

For this research study, our chief method was to obtain current information about opinions of the H1N1 vaccination from students at the University of South Florida in Tampa. The study was targeted only toward current students at the university.

Students in Dr. Kelli Burns' Public Relations Research course at USF developed a master copy of an Internet survey, housed on Survey Monkey, which was sent via a link to peers of the researchers who conducted this survey.

The survey consisted of 33 questions total, with 4 Likert Scale questions, 18 multiple choice questions, two open ended questions, and 7 yes/no questions. There was one question that asked respondents whether they were male or female.

On Wednesday, November 25 at 7:00 p.m., the survey link was sent out via email by Dr. Burns, who launched the survey for the class at that time. The survey was closed by Dr. Burns on Monday, November 30 at 3 p.m. For faster dissemination, the link was sent to peers using the USF webmail email system, Facebook, and Twitter.

Overall, 72 peers were sent an invitation to take the survey. The peers that chose to click on the link that was sent and actually attempt to take the survey make up the number of people who are represented, also known as the respondents. From those that received the Facebook, Twitter or email messages, 20 people attempted to take the survey. All 20 were eligible to take the survey.

Since it was the goal of the study to only reach students at USF, a screening question was used. Those individuals that choose to attempt to take the survey that were not USF students were thanked for their time, but turned away, to not compromise the intended sample.

Using college students was an appropriate research sample as some respondents might have prior knowledge of H1N1 and some might not be as informed. Also, some respondents might face outside pressures from parents who might encourage their children to get the vaccination. Others might be totally against the H1N1 vaccine.

Demographic information was collected from the respondents at USF. Of the students that took the survey, 66.7% were female and 33.3% were male. Half (50%) of the respondents were between 22-23 years of age. The remaining age groups included 20-21 years of age (5.60%) and 18-19 years of age (5.6%). Respondents were also asked to provide their year in school, with a little over half (55.6%) composed of seniors. Other responses came from juniors (33.3%), sophomores (5.6%) and freshman (5.6%). The respondents were also asked to provide their religion, with Protestant Christian making up half (50%). Others include non-believers (22.2%) and members of the Jewish faith (11.1%).

To help encourage respondents to get the vaccination, a stimulus was created. The stimulus in this research study was a video created by researchers Amy Dreyer, Andrew DeLong, Lindsay Fitzgerald, with production assistance by Joan Landquist. In this video, a morning show called *Medical Breakthroughs* was created complete with Dr. Lindsay, who served as the medical professional, after briefly researching the topic of H1N1. The video was created using a Flip Cam and was taped in the Clendinen Reading Room on the third floor of the School of Mass Communications at the USF Tampa campus. Once taped, the video file was posted on YouTube and embedded into the survey for respondents to view toward the beginning of the survey. All 20 respondents chose to view the video. The video, or stimuli, was 3:15 in length.

To increase the response rate for the survey, one \$25 gift card was offered to respondents in a drawing. A slot was included near the end for respondents that wished to be entered in the drawing; however, not all respondents chose to fill out this portion of the survey.

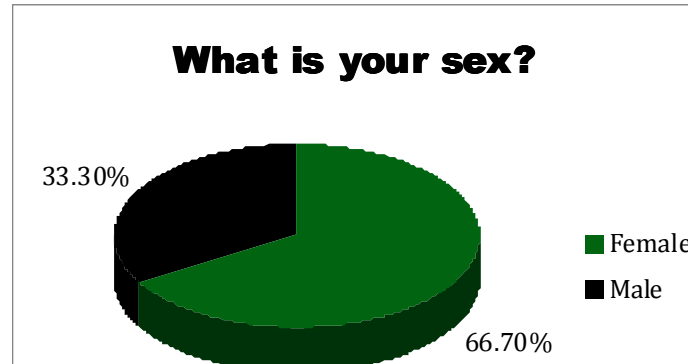
To further increase response rate from our team, one reminder email per team member was sent out to fellow USF students via the USF webmail system reminding peers to take the survey before the deadline.

To make our findings available to a wider audience, our report was posted on Wordpress.

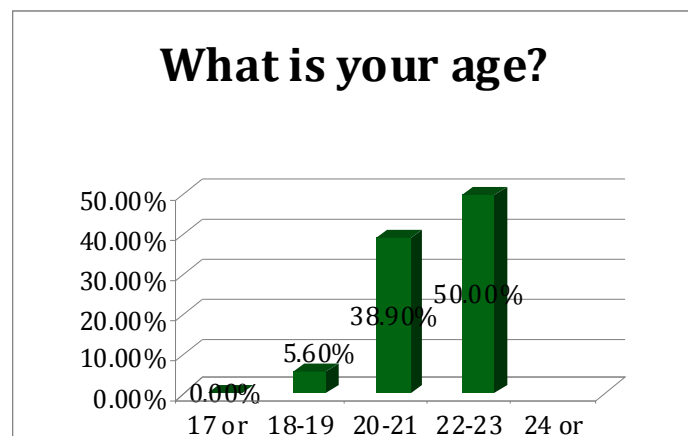
RESULTS / TABLES

■ Background information of survey respondents.

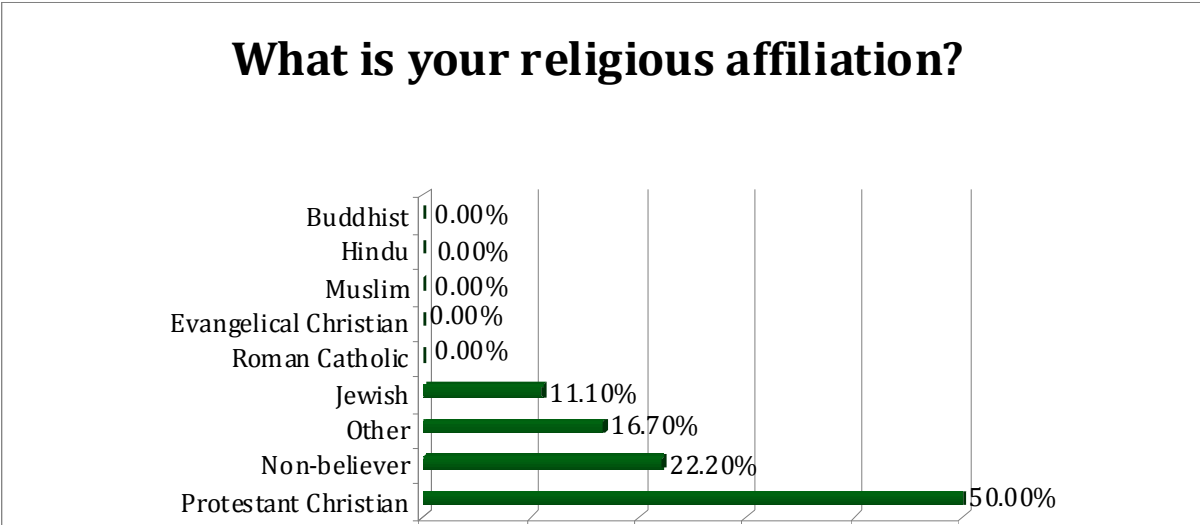
Out of those who completed the survey, 66.7% were female and 33.3% were male.



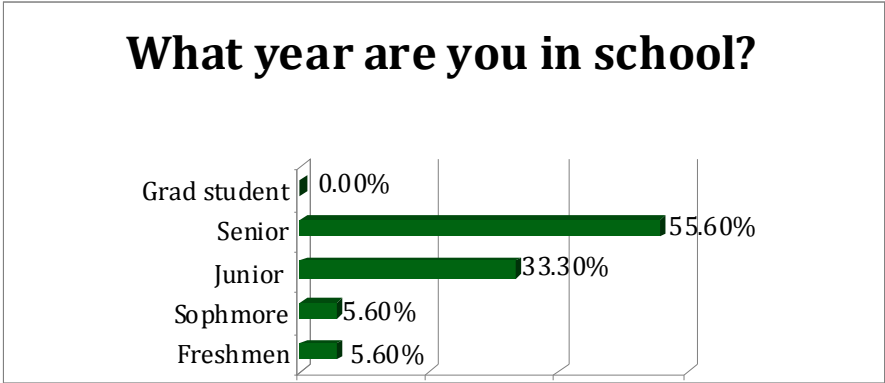
Most respondents (50%) were between the ages of 22-23 years old. Other respondents were between the ages of 20-21 (38.90%) and 18-19 (5.60%).



Most of the respondents (50%) were Protestant Christian. Others included Non-believers (22.2%) and Jewish (11.1%).

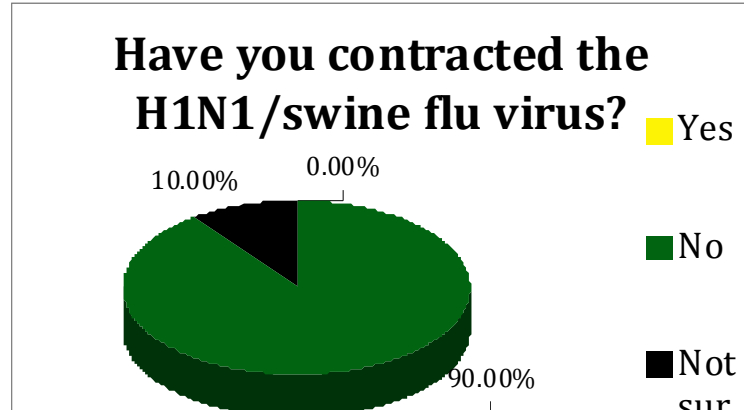


Most respondents (55.6%) were seniors at USF. Other responses were from juniors (33.3%), sophomores (5.6%) and freshmen (5.6%).

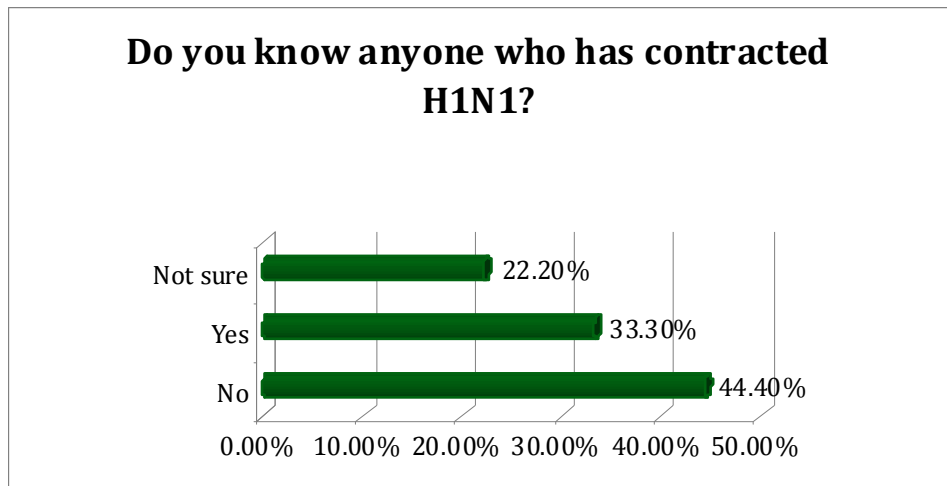


■ H1N1 Virus

Most respondents (90%) have not contracted the H1N1 virus. Some respondents (10%) were not sure.

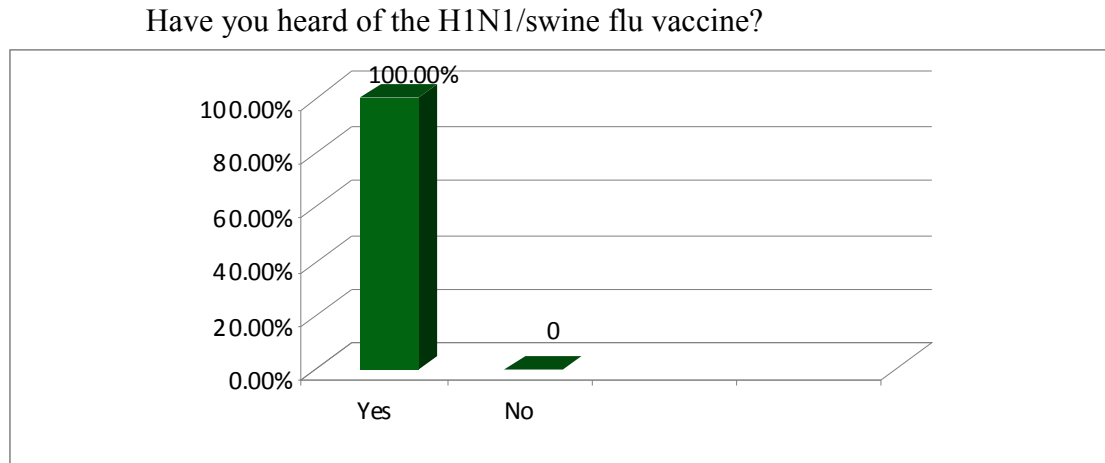


Most respondents (44.4%) did not know anyone who has contracted H1N1. Some respondents (33.3%) knew someone who has the H1N1 virus, while only 22.2% of respondents were not sure.

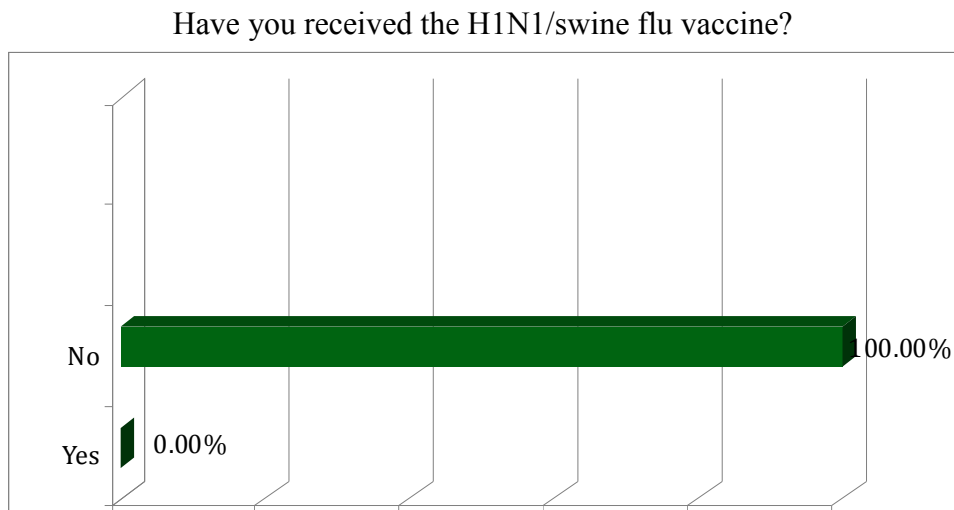


■ H1N1/swine flu vaccine

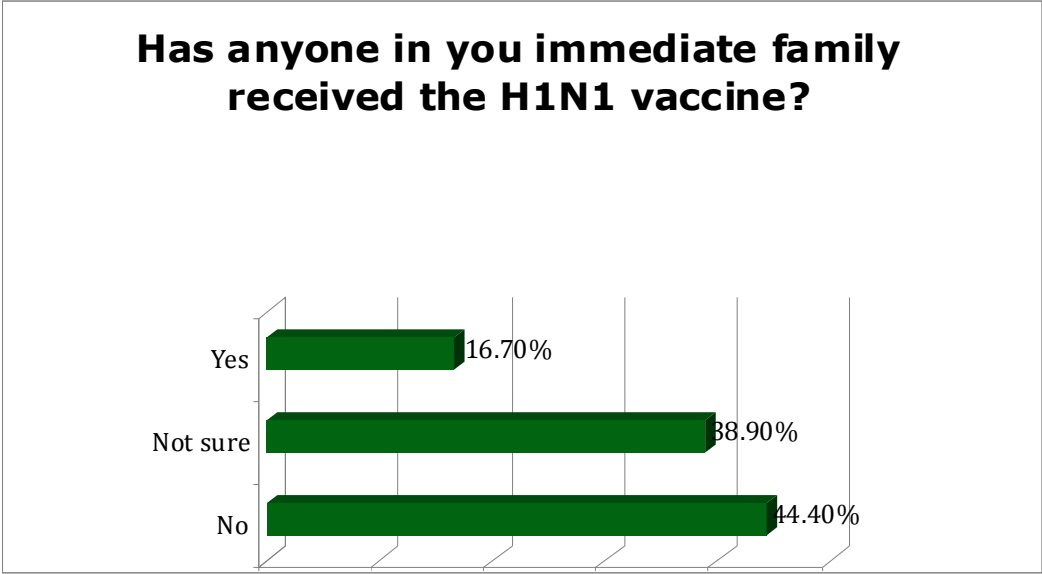
All of the respondents (100%) have heard of the H1N1/swine flu vaccine.



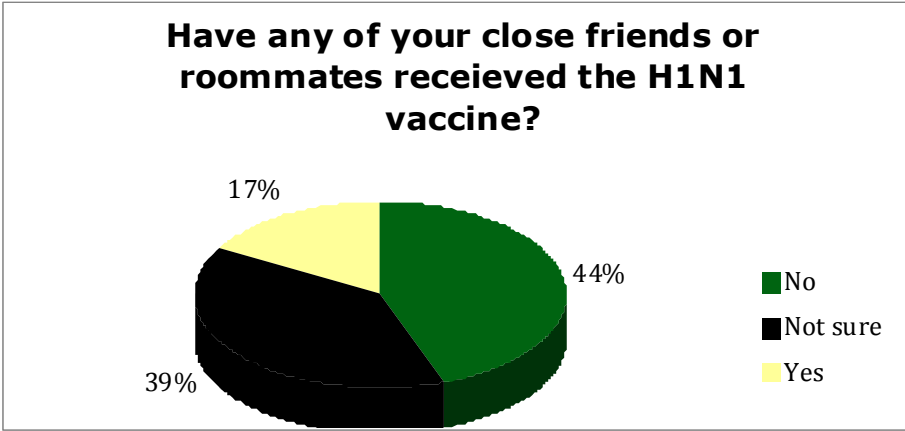
All of the respondents (100%) have not received the H1N1/swine flu vaccine.



Most respondents' (44.4%) immediate family have not received the H1N1 vaccine. Some respondents indicated that 38.9% were not sure and 16.7% knew that someone in their immediate family that received the H1N1 vaccine.

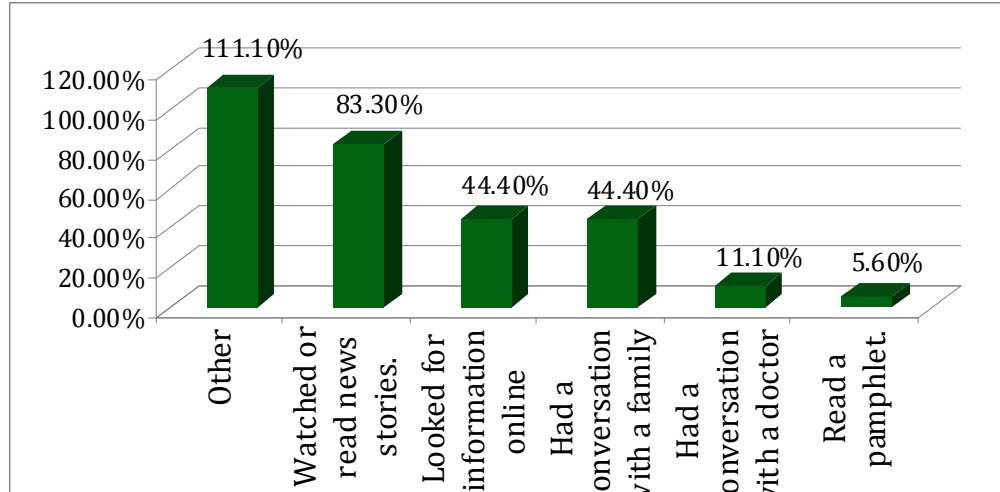


Most respondents (44%) said that their close friends/roommates had not received the H1N1 vaccine. A lot of respondents (39%) were not sure, while 17% were sure that their friends/roommates received the H1N1 vaccine.

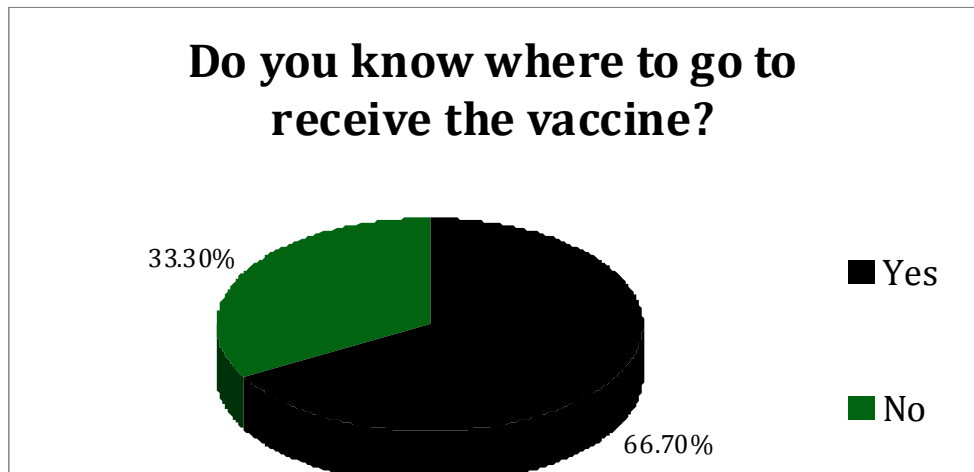


Several respondents (83.3%) watched or read news articles about the H1N1 vaccine. Few respondents (5.6%) read about the H1N1 vaccine in pamphlet.

Which of the following have you done to learn more about the H1N1 vaccine?
(Check all that apply)



Most respondents (66.7%) know where to go to receive the H1N1/swine flu vaccine, 33.3% did not know.



More than half (55.6%) of respondents feel very informed about the H1N1 flu. 22.2% of respondents somewhat disagree about feeling very informed about the benefits of the H1N1 vaccine.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel very informed about the H1N1 flu.	22.2% (4)	55.6% (10)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)
I felt very informed about the benefits of the H1N1 vaccine.	11.1% (2)	38.9% (7)	16.7% (3)	22.2% (4)	11.15% (2)
I feel very informed about the side effects of the H1N1 vaccine.	11.1% (2)	33.3% (6)	16.7% (3)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)
I feel very informed about ways to prevent the H1N1 flu.	27.8% (5)	50.0% (9)	16.7% (3)	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)

n=18

More than half (61.1%) of respondents somewhat agree that they do not like to miss class or work because of a sickness, 38.9% respondents somewhat agree that they are scared to get the vaccination due to potential side effects.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I'm scared to get the vaccine for the H1N1 virus because of its potential side effects.	5.6% (1)	38.9% (7)	22.2% (4)	22.2% (4)	11.1% (2)
I feel the H1N1 vaccine is safe.	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	5.6% (1)
I think people are overreacting to H1N1.	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	22.2% (4)	11.1% (2)	0.0% (0)
I do not like to miss class or work because I'm sick.	22.2% (4)	61.1% (11)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)
The vaccine is only for children, the elderly and pregnant women.	0.0% (0)	16.7% (3)	33.3% (6)	22.2% (4)	27.8% (5)

n=18

Most respondents (44.4%) are not worried about getting the H1N1, but a good amount of respondents (33.3%) thought that getting the vaccination is not the best way to prevent getting the H1N1 virus.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It takes too much time to get vaccinated.	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	38.9% (7)	44.4% (8)	11.1% (2)
I am worried about getting the H1N1 virus.	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)	44.4% (8)	11.1% (2)
The media are doing a great job of informing people on the symptoms and prevention of H1N1.	0.0% (0)	44.4% (8)	22.2% (4)	16.7% (3)	16.7% (3)
Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting the H1N1 virus	0.0% (0)	27.8% (5)	27.8% (5)	33.3% (6)	11.1% (2)
The H1N1 vaccination should be mandatory for college students.	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	38.9% (7)	33.33% (6)

n=18

Most respondents (38.9%) agree that USF has appropriately informed students about how to prevent the spread of H1N1, but some respondents (33.3%) believe that USF students have not been appropriately informed about the risk of H1N1.

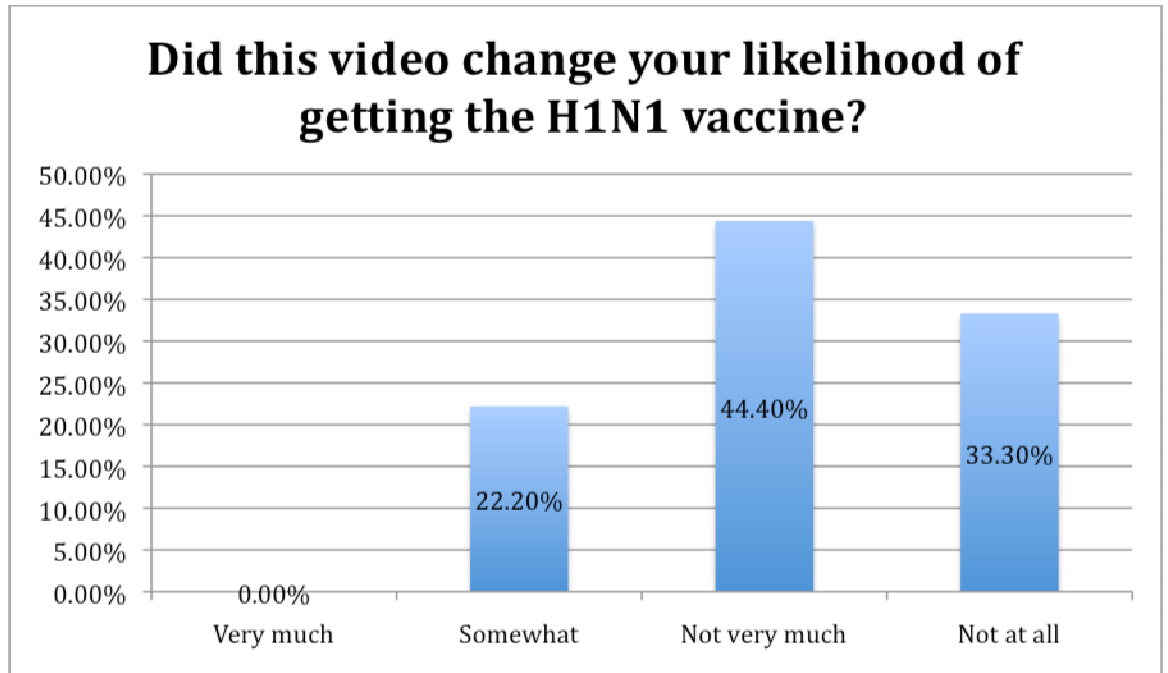
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
USF has appropriately informed students about the risk of H1N1.	11.1% (2)	33.3% (6)	16.7% (3)	33.3% (6)	5.6% (1)
USF has appropriately informed students about how to prevent the spread of H1N1.	16.7% (3)	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)
USF has appropriately informed students about the need to get the H1N1 vaccine.	0.0% (0)	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	27.8% (5)	5.6% (1)
USF has appropriately informed students about when and where they can get the H1N1 vaccine.	5.9% (1)	29.4% (5)	29.4% (5)	29.4% (5)	5.9% (1)

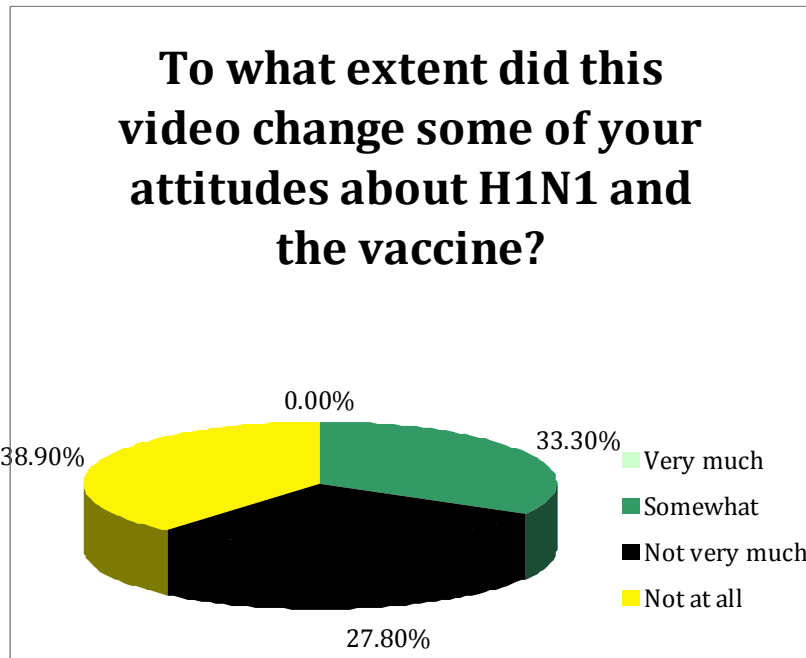
n=18

- Reactions after video

Most respondents (44.4%) indicated that this video did not change their likelihood of getting the H1N1 vaccine very much. No respondents (0.0%) indicated that the video changed their likelihood of getting the H1N1 vaccine.

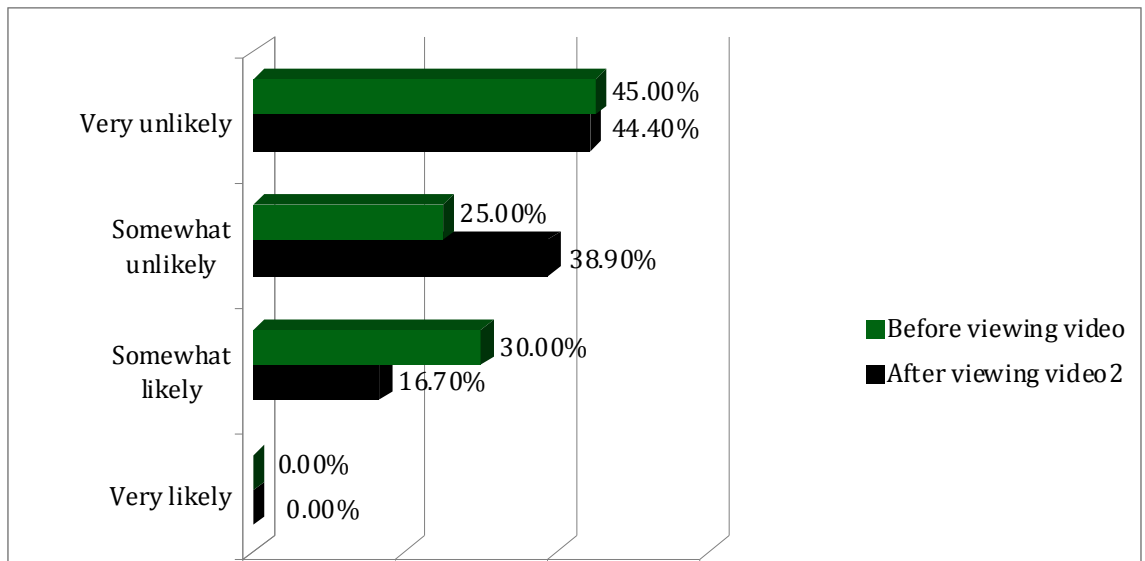


Most respondents (38.9%) indicated that the video did not change their attitude about the H1N1 virus/vaccine at all. No respondents (0.0%) completely thought that this video changed there attitude about the H1N1 virus/vaccine.



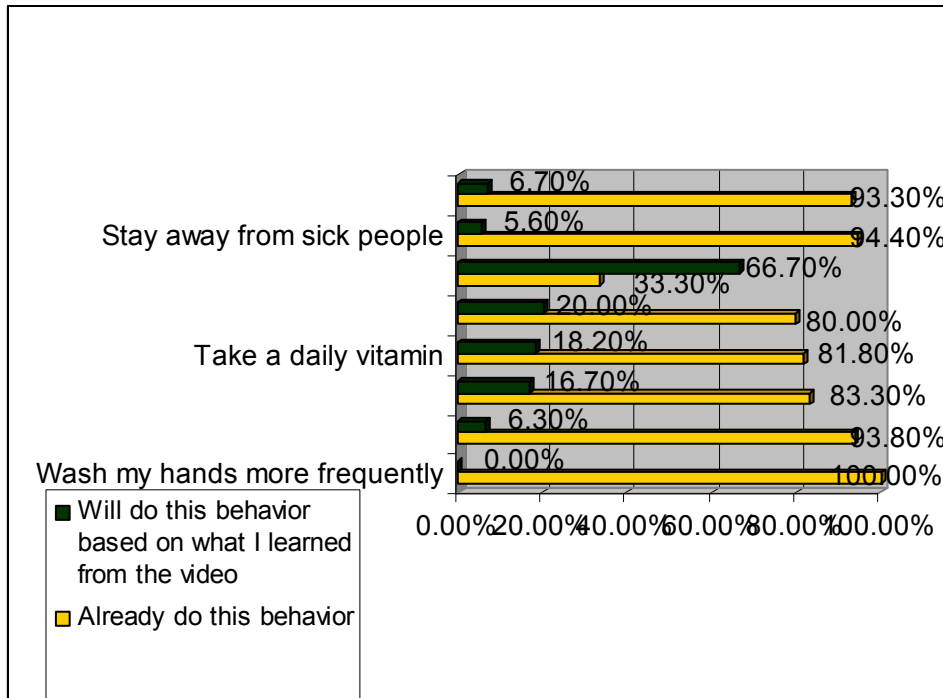
Respondents were 30% somewhat likely to get the H1N1 vaccine before the video. After the video, respondents were 16.7% somewhat likely.

How likely are you to get the H1N1 vaccine?



Almost all respondents (93.8%) sanitize their hands and after the video, 6.3% of respondents said they would begin to.

Due to an increase in reported cases of H1N1, I intend to,



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This survey explored the opinions of USF college students about the H1N1 vaccine. All of the respondents expressed hearing about the vaccine. At the time of the survey, none of the respondents had previously received the vaccine.

This study successfully discovered whether the sample was informed about the benefits of the H1N1 vaccine. More than half of the respondents said they felt very informed about it and less than half said they did not feel very informed. In addition, two thirds said they had a preconceived notion of being scared to get the vaccination.

Furthermore, it was evident that the respondents had already made up their mind that they were not going to sign up to receive the H1N1 vaccination. For example, large percentages felt informed about the vaccine. However, a representation of two thirds of the respondents showed that they might like to know more about the vaccination's benefits and side effects.

This study did not successfully alter the respondent's opinion of the H1N1 vaccination. Before watching the informational YouTube video, zero were likely to sign up for the vaccine. Even at the end of the survey, only a small amount of respondents said they would consider getting the vaccination. This could be due in part that a large number of our respondents' family and friends had not received the vaccine. If someone in a close social circle had previously received the vaccine, discussion might have taken place about it, which may or may not have left a positive mindset about the vaccine. In addition, at the time of the survey, almost all of the respondents had not previously contracted H1N1 symptoms.

To find our further information on the topic, the respondents sought outside sources. They said that they had viewed or read news stories about the H1N1 vaccine, searched for information themselves, and engaged in discussion with a family member.

The goal of the survey was to convince USF students to receive the H1N1 vaccination, and our survey results do not exhibit the completion of that goal. As mentioned previously, the data does support that a large portion was informed about the vaccination in general, however, with more media coverage and discussions with family or friends, perhaps some of these respondents might change their minds. Even after watching the stimuli, the respondents did not see a value to getting inoculated.

The respondents did indicate that a number of students would take more precautions with the sanitary aspect of coming in contact with germs.

APPENDICES

- **Blank Copy of Survey**
- **Open ended results, there should be two**

A printed copy of this project and hardcopies of both of the above items will be submitted on Monday, December 7 under Dr. Burns' office door.