

**What is 2009 H1N1 (swine flu)?**

A new influenza virus causing flu-like illness in people.

**How does 2009 H1N1 virus spread?**

Spread of 2009 H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

**What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?**

The symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus in people include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Severe illnesses and death has occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

**How severe is illness associated with 2009 H1N1 flu virus?**

Illness with the new H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. While most people who have been sick have recovered without needing medical treatment, hospitalizations and deaths from infection with this virus have occurred.

**Take these everyday steps to protect your health:**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

**What should I do if I get sick?**

Stay away from others as much as possible to avoid spreading the illness. **CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone** except to get medical care or for other necessities (Your

fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). **Staying at home means that you should not leave your home except to seek medical care.** Refrain from activities, including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

**In adults, warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:**

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and a worse cough

**Are there medicines to treat 2009 H1N1 infection?**

Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. During the current pandemic, the priority use for influenza antiviral drugs is to treat severe influenza illness (for example, hospitalized patients) and those who have a condition that places them at high risk for serious flu-related complications.

**What groups are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications?**

- Children less than 5 years old
- Persons aged 65 years or older
- Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza virus infection
- Pregnant women
- Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders
- Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV)
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities

For more information, go to: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) or [www.dsa.csupomona.edu/shs/](http://www.dsa.csupomona.edu/shs/)

Rev. 09/09

