

## Who is at risk for getting novel H1N1?

Most people have no immunity for novel H1N1 and are at risk for getting the disease. Certain groups appear to be at greater risk of developing more severe illness. Groups at greatest risk for having severe illness include children, especially children under 5 years of age, young adults, pregnant women and people with other health problems, like asthma, diabetes, lung problems, heart problems, and other serious chronic illnesses.

## What should I do if I have symptoms of H1N1?

If you are experiencing symptoms it is very important for you to limit your contact with other people to prevent spreading the disease. While staying home from work, school, and childcare be sure to:

- Check with your health care provider(s) about any special care you might need if you are pregnant, immunosuppressed, or have a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema.
- Check with your health care provider about whether or not you should take antiviral medications.
- Stay home for at least 24 hours after fever has resolved. Avoid close contact with others as much as possible, even at home.
- Identify a single household member as the ill person's caregiver to minimize interactions with others.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, or electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from getting dehydrated.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often and especially after using tissues and after coughing or sneezing.
- Never cough or sneeze in the direction of someone else.
- Be watchful for emergency warning signs (see "When should I seek emergency care?") that might mean you need to seek medical attention.

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## City of Milwaukee Health Department



**What do I Need to Know  
About Novel H1N1  
(Swine) Flu?**

## What is novel H1N1 (swine) flu?

H1N1 flu is a respiratory disease, similar to the regular seasonal influenza that makes an appearance each winter. This disease was originally called swine flu in the news media because very early laboratory tests showed that some genes were the same as those in a type of flu found in pigs. Further testing has shown there are genes from a variety of different sources in the H1N1 virus. Even so, be assured that you can't get the flu from eating pork.



## What are the symptoms of novel H1N1?

The symptoms of H1N1 include a fever, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, and cough, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. H1N1 also causes diarrhea and vomiting in many people. Typical symptoms such as a fever and cough may not be seen in young children. Infants may not show respiratory symptoms at all, only having a fever, tiredness or drowsiness.

## How is novel H1N1 spread?

H1N1 is spread in the same way seasonal flu is. The flu virus is mainly spread from person to person by coughing and sneezing. This can be directly by a person coughing or sneezing on someone else or indirectly when someone coughs or sneezes on their hand and touches another person. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

## When should I seek emergency care?

Get medical care right away if you experience:

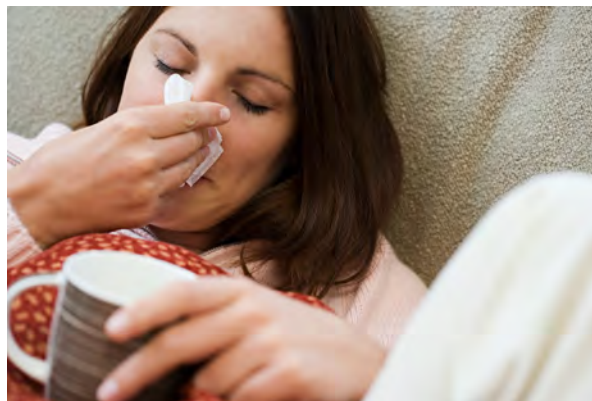
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or chest pain
- Purple or blue discoloration of the lips
- Severe vomiting or are unable to keep liquids down
- Signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, dry mouth or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry
- Seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions), feel confused or are less responsive than normal
- Flu-like symptoms that worsen over time

## How is novel H1N1 treated?

People sick with any type of flu should make sure to drink enough fluids, get plenty of rest, eat healthy foods, wash hands frequently and stay home to avoid spreading the flu to other people. Drugs used to treat seasonal flu, called antivirals, can also be used to treat the new H1N1 flu. A few influenza viruses, including H1N1, have been resistant to some, but not all, of these drugs. Healthcare providers may recommend that people who are sick with a flu-like illness receive an antiviral medication.

## If someone in my house is sick, but I'm not, do I need to stay home?

You do not need to stay home or out of school if you are not sick. However, you should limit unnecessary contact with other people as much as possible. If you start feeling sick, especially with a fever, cough, sore throat and feeling tired, you should stay at home and minimize contact with others as much as possible.



## What can I do to prevent my family from getting H1N1?

The main steps people can take to prevent the spread of both H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses are the same.

- Stay home and away from others as much as possible as soon as you have symptoms. If you suspect H1N1 flu, you should remain in isolation for 24 hours after the fever is gone.
- Cover your cough or sneeze either with a tissue, which you immediately throw away, or the crook of your elbow. This helps prevent contaminating your hand.



- Wash your hands frequently! Thoroughly soap them, washing both the palms and backs for 15 to 20 seconds, then rinse. If it isn't possible to wash your hands, use hand sanitizer gel that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes and nose as this can transfer the virus to areas where it can cause infection.

## Is there an H1N1 vaccine or shot available?

A vaccine is currently being developed and is expected to be available in the fall. The vaccine will be given first to those at greatest risk for complications from an H1N1 infection.

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