

ARE YOU READY?



What is H1N1 (swine flu)?

H1N1 (originally referred to as “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus for which a pandemic alert was declared due to how quickly it spread around the world. First detected in March 2009, symptoms of H1N1 include the same things you might experience with seasonal flu: fever, cough, fatigue, headache, chills, body aches, sore throat, diarrhea and vomiting. As with the seasonal flu, the H1N1 virus has also been associated with cases of severe illness and death.



How do you get H1N1 flu?

H1N1 is spread the same way as the seasonal flu – from person-to-person, especially through an infected person coughing or sneezing. You may also catch it by touching things that have the virus on it and then touching your mouth or nose. You cannot get H1N1 flu from eating pork.

How do you prevent H1N1 flu?

There are very simple ways to protect yourself from H1N1 flu. Number one, wash your hands frequently, especially when you are in public places. Stay at least three feet away from anyone who is coughing or sneezing. If someone around you appears sick, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and any surfaces the

sick person touches until you have a chance to wash your hands. If you are living with someone who has the H1N1 flu, it's important to protect yourself. Care for yourself by wearing a mask or a protective cloth over your mouth and nose. Wash your hands frequently and don't share dishes, towels or bed sheets with the sick person.

What to do if you get H1N1 flu

If you start to feel even some of the symptoms of H1N1 flu, avoid contact with others as much as possible. Stay home from work or school and out of public places for seven days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours. Limit contact with other people in your home to avoid getting them sick. Make sure to cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze and throw tissues directly into a garbage can and not on other surfaces where the virus can stay. If you have severe illness or are at high risk for flu complications, contact your health care provider or seek medical care. Antiviral drugs can be given to treat those who become severely ill.



Serious symptoms

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you get emergency medical care if you or your children experience any of the following serious symptoms:

Serious symptoms in children:

- Trouble breathing (such as, fast breathing or gasping for air)
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not wanting to drink fluids
- Severe or non-stop vomiting
- Not waking up or being unusually tired
- Being so irritable they don't want 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 (such as, 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 experience severe illness. These are the keys to protecting yourself and your loved ones from H1N1 flu.

