



H1N1 Influenza fact sheet

The 2009 H1N1 flu (formerly “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus first detected in spring 2009. Some important facts and prevention actions are listed here.

Is it contagious? Yes, it spreads from person to person through coughing or sneezing, or by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching the nose or mouth. The virus is viable for 2-6 hours on surfaces.

What are the symptoms? Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue are common. These symptoms are similar to that of seasonal flu.

How it is different from seasonal flu? No children and very few adults younger than 60 have significant immunity, if any, to the H1N1 virus. The seasonal flu vaccine will confer no protection from H1N1 flu.

How severe is the illness? Illness has been mild to severe. Young children and adults under the age of 25 or over 65 are at the highest risk for serious complications, hospitalization, or death. Additionally, pregnant women, individuals with weakened immune systems, or with underlying health disorders such as diabetes, cancer, chronic lung disease, or individuals with weakened immune systems are at high risk for complications.

How long are infected people contagious? Infected individuals are able to infect others from 1 day before getting ill to 5-7 days after. How can I protect myself? If you qualify, obtain an H1N1 flu vaccination. Everyday protection measures include:

- Covering your nose or mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Washing your hands frequently with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoiding close contact with other who are ill with the flu

What do I do if I have flu-like symptoms? You should stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Keep away from others as much as possible to avoid transmission of your illness.

Additional information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>