



# The FACTS on H1N1 Flu

Presented by University of Missouri Extension

## What is H1N1 flu?

- H1N1 flu is a new virus that causes an illness similar to the seasonal flu.
- H1N1 flu is sometimes referred to as the “swine flu.” However, H1N1 is the correct name for this virus.
- H1N1 flu lasts 5 to 7 days for most people.

## How does H1N1 flu spread?

- H1N1 flu spreads from person to person like the seasonal flu through coughing and sneezing without covering your mouth and nose.
- H1N1 flu also spreads by touching things with germs on them and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before cleaning your hands.

## What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1 flu?

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Chills
- Feeling tired and weak
- Headache
- In some cases, diarrhea, nausea, and/or vomiting

## What do I do if I think I am sick?

- Stay at home.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Take fever-reducing medications if needed. Call your doctor or health care provider to discuss what care you may need. Most people do not get seriously ill and do not need medical care.

**Some people are more at risk of getting very ill and should call their doctor or health care provider right away. This includes:**

- Pregnant women
- People aged 65 and older
- Children under 5
- People with chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver or kidney disease, and people with weak immune systems.

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**People with any of these emergency warning signs should call a doctor immediately or seek emergency medical care:**

- Fast breathing, trouble breathing, or bluish/gray skin
- Severe chest pain
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe vomiting
- Not waking or not interacting
- A child so irritable he or she does not want to be held

## **How do I help stop the spread of H1N1 flu?**

- Stay home and limit contact with others until your temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow. Throw away the tissue after each use.
- Clean your hands often and every time you cough or sneeze. Wash for 20 seconds with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

## **Is there a vaccine for H1N1 flu?**

- The H1N1 vaccine will likely be offered in October or November 2009.
- Certain persons should get the vaccine right away. This includes:
  - ◆ Pregnant women
  - ◆ Caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
  - ◆ Health care workers
  - ◆ All people from 6 months to 24 years of age
  - ◆ People 25 to 64 years of age who have health problems that put them at risk of getting seriously ill from the flu, such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver or kidney disease, and people with weak immune systems
- The seasonal flu vaccine will not protect you from H1N1 flu.

## **Why is there so much media coverage about H1N1?**

- H1N1 flu may cause illness in one-third to one-half of the U.S. population. This could cause schools and businesses to close for short time periods. Pay attention to local announcements about how the flu is affecting your community.
- Right now, the number of deaths is similar to that of seasonal flu, but because it is a new strain, people are more concerned.

**Do your part to protect yourself from H1N1 and help stop it from spreading.**