

District Health Department #10 Fact Sheet

2009 H1N1 Influenza

What is 2009 H1N1 Influenza?

- 2009 H1N1 flu (called swine flu early on) is a new influenza virus first seen in the U.S. in April 2009.
- There are many types of flu viruses that change constantly. 2009 H1N1 is a mix of swine, human and avian flu viruses.
- 2009 H1N1 flu virus is not the same as seasonal flu virus.
- On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) determined that a pandemic of 2009 H1N1 flu was underway.

How does H1N1 flu spread?

- Flu viruses are mainly spread from person to person by coughs and sneezes.
- People may also get flu after touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their own eyes, mouth, or nose.
- Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick.
- Children, especially younger children, might be contagious for longer periods.

What are symptoms of H1N1?

- Fever (not everyone has fever)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches and fatigue
- Headache
- Chills
- Sometimes diarrhea and vomiting

What should I do if I get sick?

- When you are sick, you should stay home and away from other people for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without the use of fever-reducing medicine).

- Most people with flu have mild illness and do not need medical care.
- Some people are at higher risk for complications and should talk to a health care provider:
 - Children less than 5 years old
 - People older than 65 years
 - Pregnant women
 - People with any chronic health problem

How can I help prevent the flu?

- **Vaccination is the single best way to prevent the flu.**
- Also very important: **wash your hands often** with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Keep hard surfaces and frequently touched objects clean.
- Get plenty of sleep, physical activity, fluids, and nutritious foods.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for talking with a health care provider. If you have any questions about influenza virus, please talk with your health care provider.

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