- Liver disorders
- Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
- Weakened immune systems due to disease or medication (such as people with HIV or AIDS, or cancer, or those on chronic steroids)
- People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy

If you (or your child) are in one of the groups above and develop flu-like symptoms, consult a health care provider to get advice about seeking medical care. Also, it's possible for otherwise healthy people to develop severe illness so any one concerned about their illness should consult their doctor.

There are "emergency warning signs" that should signal anyone to seek medical care urgently.

**Emergency Warning Signs In Children:**

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

**In Adults:**

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

## Are there medicines to treat infection with this new virus?

Yes. There are prescriptions drugs called "antivirals" that can treat influenza illness, including 2009 H1N1. These drugs can make illness milder and may also prevent serious complications. The priority use for influenza antiviral drugs this flu season is to treat people who are severely ill (hospitalized) and sick people who are at increased risk of serious influenza-related complications. CDC recommends the use of the antiviral drugs oseltamivir or zanamivir this season.

## How long should I stay home if I'm sick?

CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick. Staying at home means that you should not leave your home except to seek medical care. This means avoiding normal activities, including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings. If you must leave the house (for example to see your doctor), wear a facemask, if you have one and it is tolerable, or cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and wash your hands often to keep from spreading flu to others.

**Flu symptoms can include**

**fever***
**cough**
**sore throat**
**runny or stuffy nose**
**body aches**
**headache**
**chills**
**fatigue**
**sometimes diarrhea and vomiting**

***It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.**

**For more information visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu *or* www.flu.gov *or* call 800-CDC-INFO**

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# 2009 H1N1 Flu & You

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES · USA

CDC
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

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# 2009 H1N1

2009 H1N1 flu (sometimes called "swine flu") is a new influenza virus that is spreading worldwide among people. Because this virus is very different from current seasonal influenza viruses, many people will not have protective immunity against it and the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against it either.

Influenza is unpredictable, but this flu season could be worse than recent years because of the 2009 H1N1 virus. CDC is preparing for an early flu season and expects both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu to cause illness, hospital stays and deaths this season.

## How does 2009 H1N1 flu spread?

Both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal influenza are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with influenza. People also may get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it, and then touching their mouth or nose.

## How long can a sick person spread 2009 H1N1 flu to others?

People infected with 2009 H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to about 7 days after getting sick. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems.

## How severe is illness associated with this 2009 H1N1 flu virus?

2009 H1N1 flu illness has ranged from mild to severe. Most healthy people who have been sick with 2009 H1N1 have recovered without needing medical treatment, however, hospitalizations and deaths from 2009 H1N1 have occurred. Most people who have been hospitalized with 2009 H1N1 have had a medical condition that places them at higher risk of serious flu-related complications. However, some people who have become very ill have been previously healthy. Severe infections have been reported among people of all ages. While few people over the age of 65 have been infected with this new virus, if people in this age group become ill, they are at higher risk of developing flu-related complications.

## Who is at greatest risk of infection with this new virus?

So far, younger people have been more likely to be infected with 2009 H1N1 flu than older people. Most cases of 2009 H1N1 have occurred in people younger than 25 years of age. At this time, there are relatively few cases of 2009 H1N1 in people 65 or older, which is unusual when compared with seasonal flu.

# Prevention

## What can I do to protect myself from getting sick from 2009 H1N1 flu?

CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting the flu: vaccination, everyday preventive actions including frequent hand washing and staying home when sick, and the correct use of antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.

**A vaccine** against 2009 H1N1 flu is being produced. To protect those at greatest risk of 2009 H1N1, CDC recommends that certain people get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine first when it becomes available. These key groups include people who are at higher risk of getting sick or having serious flu complications, those who are likely to come in contact with 2009 H1N1, and those who could infect young infants who cannot be vaccinated themselves.

This includes:

- Pregnant women,
- People who live with or provide care for children younger than 6 months of age,
- Health care and emergency medical service personnel,
- People 6 months to 24 years of age , and
- People 25 to 64 years of age who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications because of an underlying health condition or compromised immune systems.

**Everyday actions** can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. (Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.)
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for several days; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues, facemasks and other related items might be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

# If You Get Sick

## What should I do if I get sick?

If you become ill with influenza-like symptoms this flu season you should stay home and avoid contact with other people except to seek medical care. Most people have been able to recover at home from 2009 H1N1 without needing medical care and the same is true of seasonal flu.

However, some people are at high risk of serious flu-related complications. They are:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- People 65 and older
- Pregnant women
- People who have:
  - Asthma
  - Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions [including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury].
  - Chronic lung disease (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] and cystic fibrosis)
  - Heart disease
  - Blood disorders (such as sickle cell disease)
  - Endocrine disorders (such as diabetes mellitus)
  - Kidney disorders