2009 H1N1 influenza (which was earlier called Swine Flu) is a type of flu caused by a new strain of influenza virus. Because it has spread to many countries, it has been declared a pandemic influenza strain.

Like other flu viruses, 2009 H1N1 spreads from person to person through coughing, sneezing, nasal secretions, and sometimes through handling objects contaminated with the virus.

Signs of 2009 H1N1 can include:
- Fatigue
- Fever
- Sore Throat
- Muscle Aches
- Chills
- Coughing
- Sneezing

Some people also have diarrhea and vomiting.

Most people recover within a week. But some people get pneumonia or other serious illnesses. Some people have to be hospitalized and some die.

WHO
Groups recommended to receive 2009 H1N1 vaccine first are:
- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for infants younger than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency personnel
- Anyone from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Anyone from 25 through 64 with certain chronic medical conditions or a weakened immune system

These groups should also be vaccinated:
- Healthy 25-64 year olds
- Adults 65 and older

WHEN
Get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine is available.

Recommendations may change if we learn that other groups of people are at particularly high risk.

Some people may need two doses of vaccine.
What if there is a severe reaction?

What should I look for?
Any unusual condition, such as a high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness.

What should I do?
• Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
• Tell the doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
• Ask your provider to report the reaction by filling a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. Or you can file this report through the VAERS website at www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967.

VAERS does not provide medical advice.

What are the risks from 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine?
A vaccine, like any medicine, could cause a serious problem, such as a severe allergic reaction. But the risk of any vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small.

The virus in inactivated 2009 H1N1 vaccine has been killed, so you cannot get influenza from the vaccine.

The risks from 2009 H1N1 vaccine are expected to be similar to those from seasonal flu vaccine:

Mild problems:
• soreness, redness, tenderness, or swelling where the shot was given
• fainting (mainly adolescents)
• headache, muscle aches
• fever
• nausea
If these problems occur, they usually begin soon after the shot and last 1-2 days.

Severe problems:
• Life-threatening allergic reactions to vaccines are very rare. If they do occur, it is usually within a few minutes to a few hours after the shot.
• In 1976, an earlier type of swine flu vaccine was associated with cases of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS). Since then, flu vaccines have not been clearly linked to GBS.

Vaccine injury compensation
The Federal government is providing this vaccine for receipt on a voluntary basis. However, state law or employers may require vaccination for certain persons.

If you or your child has a reaction to the vaccine, your ability to sue is limited by law.

However, a federal program has been created to help pay for the medical care and other specific expenses of certain persons who have a serious reaction to this vaccine. For more information about this program, call 1-888-275-4772 or visit the program’s website at: www.hrsa.gov/countermeasurescomp/default.htm.

How can I learn more?
• Ask your provider. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
• Call your local or state health department.
• Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call 1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO) or
  - Visit CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or www.cdc.gov/flu
• Visit the web at www.flu.gov