

## H1N1 (Swine) Flu Update

Swine or H1N1 influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses. People do not usually get swine flu but human infections can and have recently happened in the US and internationally. The incubation period is 2–7 days after exposure. The symptoms of H1N1 flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and begins with a fever, sore throat, sneezing, headache, and continues with dry cough, aching muscles, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting as well. Good hand washing will help prevent the spread of the H1N1 flu and other germs. Antiviral prescription medication can make the illness milder and may prevent serious complications especially for those with underlying medical conditions. **PLEASE NOTE:** In addition to the seasonal flu shot, a vaccination for the H1N1 flu should be available Oct. 2009. The shot is recommended for those under age 65 who are either pregnant or have underlying medical conditions.

### Here are some things to consider:

1. Make sure to wash hands frequently using soap and warm water. **Using an anti-bacterial hand sanitizer is good but will not replace good hand washing.**
2. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
3. Cover your mouth or nose when you cough or sneeze to protect others.
4. Have tissues handy and be sure to throw used tissues in the waste basket.
5. Eat balanced meals, drink lots of fluids, excluding sodas and other drinks high in sugar.
6. Get plenty of rest and stay home from work or school if you are sick.
7. If you come down with flu like symptoms and have a chronic medical condition like diabetes or respiratory disease, contact your doctor who will determine if testing or treatment is needed. The incubation period is 2–7 days after exposure.
8. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends seeking emergency medical care for people with any of the warning signs:  
**Children:** Fast or trouble breathing, bluish skin color, dehydration, lethargy, irritable behavior, relapse of flu symptoms, fever with rash.  
**Adults:** Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe or persistent vomiting.  
**People with limited communication or reduced sensitivity to pain** must be monitored closely for symptoms of the flu such as increase in body temperature, sign of dehydration-dry mouth and skin, change in behavior or appetite, lethargy, and signs of pain.

According to the (CDC), children or teenagers who may have the flu should **NOT** be given aspirin or medicines that contain aspirin.

### For More Information about H1N1 Flu:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: The Swine Flu and You

[http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu\\_you.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Get Smart Program: More Info about Flu

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

County of Los Angeles, Public Health: It's Not Flu as Usual.

<http://www.lapublichealth.org/ip/flu/2007-2008/>

California Department of Public Health: Health Alert for H1N1 July 22, 2009

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Interim Guidance for Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home

[http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm)



#### KEY POINTS:

- Wash hands often and well
- Get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids
- Use tissues when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth-germs spread this way
- Consult a doctor if you have any of the CDC warning signs