
2009 H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

What should I do if I get sick?

If you or your child get sick with flu-like symptoms such as cough, stuffy nose, body aches, chills, fatigue, and a fever, this flu season, you should stay home. It's possible for healthy people to develop severe illness from the flu so anyone concerned about their illness should consult a health care provider.

What are the emergency warning signs?

In children: Fast breathing or trouble breathing, bluish skin color, not drinking enough fluids, not interacting, increased irritability, flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough. **In adults:** difficulty breathing, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe vomiting.

Do I need to go the emergency room if I am only a little sick?

No. The emergency room should be used for people who are very sick. If you have the emergency signs of flu sickness, you should go. If you get sick with flu symptoms and are at high risk of flu complications, call your health care provider for advice. If you go to the emergency room and you are not sick with the flu, you may catch it from people who do have it

Are there medicines to treat 2009 H1N1?

Yes. There are drugs for treating both types of influenza called "antivirals." This flu season, antiviral drugs are being used mainly to treat people who are very sick, and to treat sick people who are more likely to get serious flu complications. Most people with 2009 H1N1 have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs and the same is true of seasonal flu.

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. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol®.) Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making them sick, and wash your hands often to keep from spreading flu to others.

CDC expects both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu to cause illness, hospital stays and deaths this season and is preparing for an early and possibly severe flu season.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (the flu):

Take time to get a flu vaccine. CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.

- While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common. A seasonal vaccine will not protect you against 2009 H1N1.
- A new vaccine against 2009 H1N1 is being made. Ask your doctor if you should get it.
- Seasonal flu vaccine also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from making them sick.
- People at greatest risk for 2009 H1N1 infection include children, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease.

Take everyday preventive actions.

- 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.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, 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.)
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other measures to keep our distance from each other to lessen the spread of flu.