

2009 H1N1

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. Flu symptoms can include:

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

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 complications due to 2009 H1N1 flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 vaccine when it first becomes available. These target groups include:

- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Pregnant women

- People ages of 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 complications due to chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems including:
 - Cancer
 - Blood disorders (including sickle cell disease)
 - Chronic lung disease (including asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
 - Diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - Kidney disorders
 - Liver disorders
 - Neurological disorders (including nervous system, brain or spinal cord)
 - Neuromuscular disorders (including muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis)
 - Weakened immune systems (including people with AIDS)

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.** Serious complications from the flu include pneumonia, ear and sinus infections, dehydration, or even death.



If you have a chronic medical condition, during a flu outbreak you should:

- Get a written record of the kind of chronic disease you have and treatment you are receiving. Keep this information with you at all times.
- Prepare a typed or printed list of all medications usually taken and the times of day they are taken.
- Keep the name, phone number, and office address of your health care provider with you at all times.
- Continue taking your medication even if you become sick with the flu, unless your health care provider says otherwise.
- Be alert to changes in your breathing and report any changes to your health care provider.
- Inform family members or close friends of your medical condition.



If you have a chronic medical condition, do the following to help prevent illness:

- Get the Seasonal Flu Vaccine.
- Get the H1N1 Flu Vaccine when it becomes available.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand cleaners.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.

If you do get the flu:

- Consult your physician.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and then throw the tissue away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home until you are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Take antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them. Antiviral drugs may be especially important for people who are sick and have a health condition that places them at greater risk of flu complications. Antiviral drugs should be taken as soon as possible after symptoms begin.

Seek immediate medical care if you experience any of these warning signs:

In Adults:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

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

It is important for each individual to consult with their health care provider, as your medical condition may determine what treatment is available for you, when you should seek treatment, and what type of vaccine (flu shot or flu mist) is appropriate for you.

More information can be found at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu, www.flu.gov, www.ready.illinois.gov and www.willcountyhealth.org.

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2009 H1N1 INFLUENZA: For People with Chronic Medical Conditions

