



Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Tips

The novel H1N1 flu virus is causing illness in infected persons here in Allegheny County and around the world. As a result, you or people around you may become ill. If so, you need to recognize the symptoms and know what to do.

Symptoms of Novel H1N1

For most people, Novel H1N1 is a mild illness that does not require medical attention. The symptoms of novel H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu:

- Fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit and above)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea and vomiting have also been reported by some people

What Should You Do if You Have Flu-Like Symptoms?

- **Do Not Come to Work/School**—Stay home and keep away from others as much as possible. Stay at home and isolate yourself from others until you have 24 hours without a fever without the use of fever reducing medication (ie: Tylenol, Advil, Motrin). You may expect to be out of work for 2-5 days or longer. CDC advises health care workers to stay out of work for 7 days past their onset of illness.
- **Go Home if You Feel Sick at Work/School**—If you become ill at work, isolate yourself from others, notify your supervisor and go home. Do not wait for the end of the day! Children who are ill at school will be sent home immediately.
- **Practice Hand Hygiene**—Wash your hands for 30 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- **Respiratory Etiquette**—Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it, or cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm. If you are sick and sharing a common space with other household members in your home, wear a facemask, if available and tolerable, to help prevent spreading the virus to others
- **Routine Cleaning**—Use routine household cleaning solutions to keep commonly touched surfaces in your home clean.

How Can I Protect Myself and Prevent the Spread of Flu?

- Wash your hands for 30 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it or cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Use routine household cleansers to keep commonly touched surfaces clean.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to see/contact my doctor if I am ill? Most people recover from novel H1N1 at home without the need of medical intervention. However, if you have an underlying health condition that puts you at higher risk for influenza complications, you should contact your physician.

In children, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include,

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- 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

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include,

- 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

Do I need a doctor's note to return to work/school? No, you do not need a doctor's note to return to work/school.

Can I come to work/school if a family member is sick? Yes, as long as you are well, you may come to work/school. However, you will need to closely monitor your condition for the next several days and stay home if you become ill.

Do I need to get tested for novel H1N1? No, testing for novel H1N1 will not effect your treatment or recovery. Most physicians will not order the novel H1N1 test unless you are severely ill or hospitalized.

Do I need to get Tamiflu or other antivirals if I get sick? Antiviral medication is only indicated for individuals who have underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza complications. If you become ill and have an underlying health condition that puts you at risk for flu complications, contact your physician.

For more information, call 412-687-ACHD (2243) or visit www.achd.net