

KEY FACTS ABOUT H1N1

What is H1N1 Influenza?

H1N1 Influenza is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. It was initially referred to as “swine flu” because it appeared similar to flu viruses found in swine; subsequent testing shows that it is a new strain of virus that combines genetic material found in human, avian, and swine influenza viruses.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 Influenza?

Most individuals with H1N1 Influenza experience illness similar to seasonal flu which includes a combination of fever with either cough or sore throat. You may also experience extreme fatigue and body aches. Some people are at higher risk for complications and should seek prompt medical evaluation if they develop flu symptoms. If you have diabetes, chronic heart disease, immunosuppression, asthma for which you take daily medication, other chronic respiratory disease, or you are pregnant, call your healthcare provider or the Student Health Service if you develop symptoms.

How does H1N1 Influenza spread?

H1N1 Influenza is transmitted like other strains of human influenza, which is mainly person-to-person transmission through coughing or sneezing of people infected with the virus.

Is there a vaccine available to protect me against H1N1 Influenza?

There currently is no vaccine to protect humans from H1N1 Influenza. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) along with manufacturers have begun the process for developing a vaccine against this virus. However, there is no further information at this time about the development of the vaccine or at what point it may be available for distribution.

I had a Seasonal Flu Shot this year. Will that protect me from H1N1 Influenza?

No. The H1N1 Influenza virus is antigenically different from viruses covered by vaccines for seasonal flu.

How can I protect myself?

Public Health authorities recommend the following health and wellness behaviors:

- 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, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are sick. Influenza is thought to spread mainly by person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.

What should I do if I get sick?

If you get sick with influenza, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others. You should stay home until you are without a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. Remember to contact your professor promptly if you have to miss class due to illness so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Rest, drink plenty of fluids and use pain and fever reducers such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen, as directed, to manage body aches and fever.

Emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include; difficulty breathing or shortness or breath; pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen; sudden dizziness; confusion ; severe or persistent vomiting

