



## **NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA (SWINE FLU)**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Novel H1N1 (swine flu) is a type of influenza virus that causes respiratory disease that can spread among people. Most people infected with this virus in the United States have had milder illness, but some have had more severe illness and some people have died from it.

The symptoms of novel H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of regular flu: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also have diarrhea and vomiting.

A vaccine to protect people from the novel H1N1 virus is expected to be available in the fall of 2009.

Spread of this new influenza virus is thought to happen in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person when someone who is infected coughs or sneezes. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

Infected people may be able to infect others from one day before they show any symptoms to seven or more days after they become sick. That means you may be able to pass the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as when you are sick.

To protect yourself, your family members and others around you, follow these flu prevention tips:

- Get vaccinated against influenza when the vaccine becomes available.
- As always, if you are sick you should stay home from work or school to avoid spreading the infection to others. Stay home until 24 hours after fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear ill.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs often are spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Wash your hands frequently.

Contact your doctor if you are experiencing cough, fever and fatigue, possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting.

For more information, visit [www.ndflu.com](http://www.ndflu.com).

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