



What is H1N1 influenza?

H1N1 (referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in humans in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, including Mexico and Canada, have reported people sick with this new virus. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 flu. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

The CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness stay at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without using fever-reducing medications.

Who should be vaccinated?

The CDC has met and made vaccine recommendations for who should receive the vaccine when it becomes available and which groups should be prioritized if the vaccine is initially available in limited quantities. The five key target groups recommended by the CDC:

- pregnant women
- people who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- health care and emergency medical services personnel
- persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years
- people 25 to 64 years with chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems

When should I seek urgent medical help?

In children, emergency warning signs that require 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 require urgent medical attention include:

- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- sudden dizziness
- confusion