

2009 H1N1 INFLUENZA (SWINE FLU) (Adult)

The 2009 H1N1 influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease caused by the influenza A (H1N1) strain of the influenza viruses. Scientists originally thought the virus came from pigs (swine). But it is now known that this is not the case. This germ is a new virus. The 2009 H1N1 flu virus can be passed among people the same way the regular flu spreads—through droplets that form when someone with the virus coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks. These droplets pass from person to person through the air. You can also become infected if you touch a surface on which the droplets have landed and then transfer the virus to your eyes, nose, or mouth.

2009 H1N1 flu symptoms are about the same as regular flu symptoms. These include fever and chills, headache, body and muscle aches, dry cough, runny nose and weakness. You may also have sore throat, diarrhea, or vomiting.

There is no way to know for sure in the emergency department whether you have 2009 H1N1 or another type of influenza. A rapid influenza test can show if flu virus is present. A confirming test is then done to tell whether you have 2009 H1N1 or another strain. Results of this test take a few days. You will be notified when the test results come back. In the meantime, follow the instructions you are given, including the measures below.

HOME CARE**Medications:**

- If the 2009 H1N1 flu is in your area and your symptoms are severe, the doctor may prescribe medications called antivirals. These must be taken within 2 days of when your symptoms started. Antivirals work by stopping the virus from reproducing in your body. This gives your body's immune system a chance to fight the virus. After taking the medication, your symptoms may be milder and you may recover quicker than without the medication. The medication may also prevent serious complications such as pneumonia. Mild side effects from these drugs occasionally occur (the chance of side effects is 5 to 10%). Serious side effects are rare. The doctor will decide if this medication is needed. Follow your doctor's instructions for taking these medications. Take ALL medication as prescribed until it is gone.
- If your symptoms are mild or it has been more than 2 days since your symptoms started, the doctor will likely not prescribe medications.
- Antibiotics are NOT helpful against influenza.
- You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) to control fever and muscle aching. (NOTE: If you have chronic liver or kidney disease or ever had a stomach ulcer or GI bleeding, talk with your doctor before using these medicines.) Do not give aspirin to anyone under 18 years of age who is ill with a fever. It may cause severe liver damage.
- A vaccine against 2009 H1N1 flu is available. Talk to your doctor about whether the vaccine is right for you.

General Care:

- Unless told otherwise by your doctor, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids, such as water or juice, to prevent dehydration. A good rule is to drink enough so that you urinate your normal amount.
- Get plenty of rest.

Preventing the Spread:

- Wash your hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing. Or, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Then throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow. Ask your healthcare provider whether you should wear a

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions.

medical facemask over your mouth and nose to help prevent spreading the virus.

- Stay home until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours and you don't have fever symptoms (such as chills). Be sure the fever isn't being hidden by fever-reducing medications (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen).
- Don't share food, utensils, drinking glasses, or a toothbrush with others.
- Have family members wash their hands often. They should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth as much as possible.
- Ask your doctor whether others in your household should receive antiviral medication to help them avoid infection.

FOLLOW UP with your doctor or as directed by our staff if you are not improving over the next week. You will be told how to get test results.

NOTE: 2009 H1N1 flu is not caused by eating pork or pork products. Eating pork or pork products that have been properly handled and cooked is safe. To learn more about 2009 H1N1 flu, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm

GET PROMPT MEDICAL ATTENTION if any of the following occur:

- Fever rises over 100°F (37.7°C)
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or chest pain or pressure
- Cough with lots of colored sputum (mucus) or blood in the sputum
- Severe headache, face, neck or ear pain
- New rash
- Confusion, behavior change or seizure
- Severe or repeated vomiting or inability to keep fluids down