

2009 Novel Influenza A (H1N1)

Fact Sheet

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for talking with a health care provider. If you have any questions about the Novel Influenza A virus, please call your health care provider.

Human Infections

- In late March and early April 2009, human cases of Novel Influenza A (previously referred to as “Swine Flu”) infections were identified internationally and in the United States.
- Vaccines for seasonal flu are not believed to provide protection from Novel Influenza A.

How Does Novel Influenza A Spread?

- Flu viruses are mainly spread from person to person when someone with the virus coughs or sneezes. Novel Influenza A is NOT spread by eating pork or other pork related products.
- People may also become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their eyes, mouth or nose.
- Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick.

Staying Healthy

- Most important: **WASH YOUR HANDS** often with soap or water, 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try not to touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus.
- Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious foods.

Avoid Contact with Sick People

- If you get sick, it is recommended that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

How Long Can An Infected Person Spread Novel Influenza A?

- People infected with seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with the new H1N1 virus.

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Novel Influenza A Signs and Symptoms

- High fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting
- Like seasonal flu, Novel Influenza may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.
- If you have any of these symptoms, call your health care provider.

Remember to
**wash your hands
often!**

Warning Signs in Children that Need Urgent Medical Attention

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- 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.
- Fever with a rash

Warning Signs in Adults that Need Urgent Medical Attention

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Are Medicines Available to Treat Novel Influenza A?

- Yes. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that fight against the flu by keeping the flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick- within 2 days of the start of symptoms.
- Antiviral treatment is only recommended for hospitalized patients with confirmed, probable or suspected cases or patients who are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications

Mid-Michigan District Health Department www.mmdhd.org

Clinton County Branch Office
1307 E Townsend Road
St. Johns, MI 48879
989-224-2195

Gratiot County Branch Office
151 Commerce Drive
Ithaca, MI 48847
989-875-3681

Montcalm County Branch Office
615 N State Street; Suite 1
Stanton, MI 48888
989-831-5237

