



Interim Guidance on General Questions and Answers for Response to Human Infections with the 2009 Influenza A H1N1 Virus

What is H1N1 INFLUENZA?

H1N1 influenza is a new strain of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus caused by a respiratory disease of pigs. Before a 2009 global outbreak of H1N1 influenza, person-to-person transmission was limited. However, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is now tracking widespread reports of human infection with H1N1 influenza. Other countries have also reported human cases. An updated case count of confirmed H1N1 Influenza A infections in the United States is kept at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/investigation.htm>

Is H1N1 Influenza contagious?

CDC determined that the H1N1 Influenza virus is contagious and spreads from human to human through coughing or sneezing. Droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air. People become infected by touching an object with flu viruses on it, and then touching their mouth or nose without first washing their hands. Infected people can sicken others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after becoming sick. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 influenza in humans?

People with H1N1 influenza have symptoms similar to regular human flu: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people with H1N1 influenza report diarrhea and vomiting. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 influenza may worsen previously existing medical conditions or cause severe illness such as pneumonia, respiratory failure, and death.

Most ill people recover after a few days of rest and do not necessarily have to go to the doctor's office unless their condition worsens. Those ill with the Influenza A (H1N1) virus should call the doctor to receive care instructions. The health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

Seek urgent emergency medical care if ill persons experience any of the following warning signs:

In children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Irritable child does not want to be held
- Fever with a rash
- Flu-like symptoms improve but return with fever and worse cough

In adults:

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

How is H1N1 influenza diagnosed?

Physicians use symptoms to diagnose H1N1 influenza, and confirm the diagnosis with a laboratory test.

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156



How is H1N1 Influenza treated?

The CDC recommends Oseltamivir or Zanamivir for treating and preventing H1N1 influenza infection. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that make illnesses milder, prevent serious complications, and hasten recovery. Antiviral drugs work best to treat sick people if they begin within two days after symptoms appear.

How long should ill persons wait before returning to normal activities with others?

Persons who become sick with influenza should stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. The CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

How is H1N1 influenza prevented?

There is no vaccine available right now to protect humans against H1N1 influenza. Prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza by taking these steps:

- 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 warm water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home from work or school if you become sick, and limit contact with others.

Can I get H1N1 influenza from eating or preparing pork?

You cannot get H1N1 influenza from eating pork or pork products. It is not spread by food.

References and Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: www.pandemicflu.gov
- Delaware Division of Public Health: www.flu.delaware.gov