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H1N1 (SWINE) INFLUENZA FACT SHEET #5

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Symptoms

Common symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, diarrhea, and vomiting. Nearly all persons with flu will have at least two of these symptoms. The high-risk groups for novel H1N1 flu are not known at this time but it is possible that they may be the same as for seasonal influenza. People at high risk of serious complications from seasonal flu include people age 65 years and older, children younger than 5 years old, pregnant women, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), and people who are immunosuppressed (e.g. taking immunosuppressive medications or infected with HIV).

Avoid Contact with Others

If you are sick, you may be ill for a week or longer. You should stay home and avoid contact with other persons, except to seek medical care if necessary. If you leave the house to seek medical care, wear a mask or cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue. At the current time, CDC believes that this virus has the same properties in terms of spread as seasonal flu viruses. With seasonal flu, studies have shown that people may be contagious from one day before they develop symptoms to up to 7 days after they get sick. Children, especially younger children might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

Treatment is Available for those who are Seriously Ill

It is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care.

If you have severe illness or are at high risk for flu complications, contact your health care provider or seek medical care. Your health care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed. Be aware that if the flu becomes widespread, there will be little need to continue testing people, so your health care provider may decide not to test for the flu virus.

Antiviral drugs can be given to treat those who become severely ill with influenza. These antiviral drugs are prescription medications that must be prescribed by a health care professional. The two antiviral medications that are being prescribed to treat the symptoms of the H1N1 flu are oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza).

Protect Yourself, Your Family, and Community

- Stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available. Visit the CDC H1N1 FLU website.
- 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 water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth as germs are easily spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with a flu-like illness, stay home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. Keep away from other household members as much as possible. This is to keep you from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
- Learn more about how to take care of someone who is ill in [Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home](#).*
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds, and other social distancing measures.
- If you don't have one yet, consider developing a family emergency plan as a precaution. This should include storing a supply of extra food, medicines, and other essential supplies. Further information can be found in the [Flu Planning Checklist](#).*

*Information taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website which can be visited at:
www.cdc.gov/swineflu/