

NOVEL H1N1 FLU

What is novel A/H1N1 (swine flu)?

Novel H1N1 is a newly identified influenza A virus causing illness in people worldwide. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, have also reported people sick with this new virus and in June 2009 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an Influenza Pandemic. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread, however, since it first appeared it has continued to produce disease into the summer.

How does novel H1N1 virus spread?

Spread of novel H1N1 virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?

The symptoms of novel H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Also, like seasonal flu, severe illnesses and death has occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

It is believed that the novel H1N1 virus has the similar 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.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
2. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
4. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
5. If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

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What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?

1. If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
2. Keep away from others as much as possible. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

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