



## Genesee County Health Department 2009 Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Information

### **What is novel H1N1 flu (swine flu)?**

The novel H1N1 flu is a viral infection of the respiratory tract caused by the 2009 novel H1N1 virus. This flu is much like seasonal human influenza (flu).

### **Who can get novel H1N1 flu?**

Just like regular, seasonal flu, anyone can get the novel H1N1 flu virus. Updated counts of confirmed novel H1N1 infections in the United States can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/index.htm>

### **How is the novel H1N1 flu virus spread?**

The novel H1N1 flu virus is spread the same as seasonal flu. The virus is spread from person to person by droplets from the nose, throat, and mouth through coughing, sneezing and speaking. You **cannot** become infected by eating pork or any pork product.

### **What are the signs and symptoms of the novel H1N1 flu in people?**

Symptoms of the novel H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have diarrhea and vomiting.

### **What are the complications of novel H1N1 flu?**

Complications can include pneumonia and sometimes respiratory failure.

### **What should I do if I get sick?**

If you become ill with flu-like symptoms, contact your health care provider to determine if testing or treatment is needed. Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick. This means you should not do your normal activities, including working, going to school, traveling, shopping, and attending social events and public gatherings.

### **Is there treatment for the novel H1N1 flu?**

Your **health care provider** will determine if testing and treatment is needed. Antiviral medications prescribed by a health care provider help fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. For treating influenza, antiviral drugs work best if started within 1-2 days of symptoms.

Children and teens should not be given aspirin/aspirin products to treat the flu because of the risk of developing Reye's Syndrome.

### **Is there a vaccine for the novel H1N1 flu virus?**

A novel H1N1 Flu vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public in the fall. This vaccine, when available, is separate from the seasonal flu vaccine.

**How long can an infected person spread the novel H1N1 flu virus?**

Usually 1 day prior to flu symptoms and up to 7 days after becoming ill. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with the novel H1N1 virus.

**How can I stay healthy and avoid getting the flu?**

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and throw tissue in the trash immediately.
- Wash you hands often, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners (60% alcohol concentration) are effective.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people when possible.
- If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others.
- Get the flu shot for both novel H1N1 flu and seasonal flu.

**What is the most effective way to wash my hands?**

- Use soap and running water
- Rub your hands together vigorously for 20 seconds
- Wash all hand surfaces, including:
  - Backs of your hands
  - Wrist area
  - Between your fingers
  - Under your fingernails
- Rinse your hands well
- Dry your hands with disposable paper towel
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of using your clean hands

**Where can I get more information about the novel H1N1 flu?**

Contact the Genesee County Health Department novel H1N1 Flu Information Hotline at 810-257-3887 or visit the Genesee County Health Department's website at [www.gchd.us](http://www.gchd.us) and click on the novel H1N1 Flu Information & Updates link on the left side of the screen.