

H1N1 influenza (swine flu) - Frequently Asked Questions

What is H1N1 influenza?

H1N1 influenza, also known as “swine flu,” is a newly-identified flu virus that can spread from people who are infected to others through coughs and sneezes. When people cough or sneeze, they spread germs through the air or onto surfaces that other people may touch. H1N1 influenza is not transmitted from pigs to humans or from eating pork products.

How can I protect myself from getting the H1N1 influenza?

1) Get the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available, 2) wash your hands often, and 3) avoid close contact with people who are sick.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 influenza?

The symptoms of H1N1 influenza are similar to seasonal flu: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Sometimes people also have diarrhea and vomiting.

Is there a vaccine for H1N1 influenza?

A vaccine for H1N1 influenza is being developed, and vaccine manufacturers expect to have it ready in October 2009. Initial supplies of vaccines will go to those at highest risk, including:

- Pregnant women
- Children and young adults 6 months to 24 years of age
- Persons ages 25-64 years old with health conditions that could make them dangerously ill from the flu (such as those with heart disease, diabetes, asthma, or anyone with a lowered immunity)
- Household members and caregivers of children younger than 6 months in age; and
- Healthcare workers and emergency medical service providers

What should I do if I am sick?

- **Stay home** from work or school. Remain home for at least 24 hours after you are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes** with a tissue or your inner elbow.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you don't have access to soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

How do I decide whether to seek medical care?

Make decisions about when to seek medical care as you would under normal circumstances. Consult with a health care provider for the following symptoms:

- Chest pain or trouble breathing
- Rapidly worsening illness
- If the ill person is unresponsive or won't make eye contact
- Severe sore throat (unable to swallow) or severe cough
- Fever for more than three days

If you need medical care and don't have a medical provider or health insurance, call the **Community Health Access Program at 800-756-5437**. You will not be asked to provide proof of immigration status.

For more information and on-going updates: www.kingcounty.gov/health/H1N1
Flu Hotline, 877-903-5464, 24 hours/day (English and Spanish)