



## **Novel Influenza A H1N1 (Swine Flu)** *(updated 8/11/09)*

### **Common Symptoms:** (Similar to regular seasonal flu)

- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Body aches
- Sore throat
- Cough and runny nose
- Vomiting and Diarrhea (sometimes)

### **Contagiousness:**

- Person-to-person through coughing or sneezing
  - People are contagious from one day before their symptoms start and until up to 7 days after the first day of illness.
  - Children can be contagious for even longer.
  - Anyone who still has symptoms should be considered contagious.
- Touching something that has the virus on it and then touching your mouth or nose
  - The virus can live up to 2-8 hours on surfaces like tables, doorknobs, etc.
- It can take up to 2-5 days, after becoming infected, to start showing symptoms.

### **Prevention/Preparation:**

- **Get your family vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu when vaccines are available.**
- Identify a separate room in the house for the care of sick family members.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Collect games, books, DVDs and other items to keep your family entertained if schools are dismissed or your child is sick and must stay home.
- 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.
  - Wash for 15-20 seconds each time.
  - Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school until at least 24 hours after your fever is gone (without using fever-reducing medicine) and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.



## Caring for a child who is home sick with H1N1 Flu: *(updated 8/11/09)*

- **Check with your pediatrician about any special care that might be needed, such as if your child has a chronic medical condition, such as asthma, sickle cell, immune problems or diabetes**
- **Keep your child home until their fever has been gone for at least 24 hours (without using fever-reducing medicine)**
- Make sure that your child gets plenty of rest
- Encourage your child to drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants such as Pedialyte) to keep them from being dehydrated
- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after handling items, such as tissues, after they have been used by your sick child
- To prevent the spread of influenza virus it is important to keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- Linens (such as bed sheets and towels) should be washed by using household laundry soap and tumbled dry on a hot setting. Individuals should avoid “hugging” laundry, prior to washing it, to prevent contaminating themselves.
- Prevent your child from having close contact (closer than 6 feet) with others, including any high-risk family members. If in-home contact is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask (patient and/or contacts). Do not let them go to school, church or any public place while they are ill.
- **Be watchful for emergency warning signs that might indicate you need to seek medical attention for your child.**
- **Contact your pediatrician if you have any concerns about your child**

### Rare Concerning Symptoms:

***In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:***

- ***Fast breathing or trouble breathing***
- ***Bluish skin color***
- ***Not drinking enough fluids***
- ***Not waking up or not interacting***
- ***Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held***
- ***Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough***
- ***Fever with a rash***
- ***Seizures (convulsions)***

## Treatment:

- There are treatments available.
- They are the same ones used to treat regular human flu.
- They will be prescribed by your child's physician if necessary.
- ***Most people do not need antiviral drugs to fully recover from the flu.***
- ***Aspirin or aspirin-containing products (e.g. Pepto Bismol) should not be given to any child 18 years old and younger with a confirmed or suspected case of swine-origin influenza A (H1N1) virus infection due to the risk of Reye syndrome.***
  - *Check ingredient labels on over-the-counter cold and flu medications to see if they contain aspirin.*
  - *Children and teenagers with the flu can take medicines without aspirin, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), to relieve symptoms as per the medication directions.*
  - **Children younger than 4 years of age should not be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a healthcare provider.**
  - **The safest care for flu symptoms in children younger than 2 years of age is using a cool- mist humidifier and a suction bulb to help clear away mucus.**
  - *Fevers and aches can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®).*
  - *Over-the-counter cold and flu medications used according to the package instructions may help lessen some symptoms such as cough and congestion. Importantly, these medications will not lessen how infectious a person is.*
  - *Check the ingredients on the package label to see if the medication already contains acetaminophen or ibuprofen before taking additional doses of these medications—don't double dose!*
  - *Check with your child's pediatrician or pharmacist if they are taking other over-the- counter or prescription medications not related to the flu.*