

Things you can do: The Novel H1N1 2009 Flu Virus



Help protect you and your family

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), good health habits can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu.¹

What is the novel H1N1 2009 flu virus?

The novel H1N1 virus is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. The virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. It was quickly determined that the virus spreads from person-to-person, probably in much the same way as seasonal flu. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) labeled the novel H1N1 virus as a pandemic virus.²

Is an effective vaccine already available against the novel H1N1 virus?

No. Since the novel H1N1 virus is new, there is no vaccine currently available. However, a vaccine is in production and may be ready for the public in the fall. The novel H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine – both vaccines are necessary to help protect people against the influenza viruses circulating this year.² While work is underway to produce the novel H1N1 vaccine, it's important that people take the necessary steps to help stop the spread of germs in the near term.

How does the novel H1N1 virus spread?

- Flu viruses spread mainly from person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza.
- Viruses can also spread when a person touches a surface with flu viruses on it and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

For more information about the novel H1N1 virus and what you can do to help protect you and your family, visit:

www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or
www.pandemicflu.gov

How can I protect myself?

- Encourage everyone to cover their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands rubs are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Use disinfectants on frequently touched surfaces.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, 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.)

What should I do if someone I live with has confirmed novel H1N1 virus?

Follow the same precautions you would to avoid ordinary seasonal flu:

- Limit contact with the affected person.
- Avoid having visitors.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Consider using a face mask or N95 respirator.
- Wash all dishes with warm soap and water.

Can household cleaning and disinfecting help prevent further transmission?

Yes. To help prevent transmission of germs, follow these simple steps:

- Frequently touched surfaces should be disinfected with an U.S. EPA-registered disinfectant product that is effective against the Influenza A virus.
- Surfaces to disinfect include bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, toys for children, doorknobs, light switches, telephones and refrigerator handles.
- Use disinfectant wipes for frequently touched electronic items such as computer mouse and keyboards, phones and remote controls, etc.