



H1N1: RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS AND KNOW WHAT TO DO

Most people will not need to seek medical care, and their symptoms will resolve over time with plenty of fluids and rest.

Symptoms

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 novel H1N1 flu virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Avoid Contact with Others

If you are sick, you may be ill for a week or longer. You should stay home and keep away from others as much as possible, including avoiding travel and not going to work or school, 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 fever-reducing medicine) If you leave the house to seek medical care, wear a face mask, if available and tolerable, and cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue. In general, you should avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness, especially people at increased risk of severe illness from influenza. With seasonal flu, 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.

Treatment is available for those who are seriously ill, but it is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care. If you have severe illness or you are at high risk for flu complications, call your health care provider or seek medical care. Your health care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed.

For relief of fever, fever-reducing medications are recommended such as acetaminophen or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Check ingredient labels on over-the-counter cold and flu medications to see if they contain aspirin. Children 5 years of age and older and teenagers with the flu can take medicines without aspirin, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), to relieve symptoms. Children younger than 4 years of age should NOT be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a health care provider.

Emergency Warning Signs

If you become ill and experience any of the following signs, seek emergency medical care.

Children, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- 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

Adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough