



Questions & Answers

H1N1 Flu and You

What is H1N1 (swine flu)?

H1N1 (referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, including Mexico and Canada, have reported people sick with this new virus.

What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu virus are similar to seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Many people have also had diarrhea and vomiting. Also, like seasonal flu, there have been severe illnesses and deaths.

How does H1N1 virus spread?

Spread of H1N1 virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

At the current time, CDC believes that this virus has the same properties in terms of spread as seasonal flu viruses. With seasonal flu, studies have shown that 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. CDC is studying the virus and its capabilities to try to learn more and will provide more information as it becomes available.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

- A. Take everyday actions to stay healthy.
- 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. 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 are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you 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.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

Other important actions you can take are:

- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based hand rubs, tissues and other related items could be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

Wood County Health Department

1840 E. Gypsy Lane Rd.

Bowling Green, OH 43402

419-352-8402 or 419-244-1610

healthdept@co.wood.oh.us

www.co.wood.oh.us/HealthDepartment



Questions & Answers: H1N1 and You (continued)

How long can influenza virus live on objects such as books and doorknobs?

Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on the surface.

What household cleaning should be done to prevent the spread of influenza virus?

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.

How can I get more information?

Call

Wood County Health Department: 419-352-8402 or 419-244-1610

Community information and referral services by United Way: 211

Ohio Department of Health H1N1 Hotline: 866-800-1404

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348

Online

Wood County Health Department
www.co.wood.oh.us/HealthDepartment

Ohio Department of Health
www.odh.ohio.gov

Center for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov

Seasonal Flu Information

Who Should Get Vaccinated?

In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. However, it is recommended by ACIP that certain people should get vaccinated each year. They are either people who are at high risk of having serious flu complications or people who live with or care for those at high risk for serious complications. During flu seasons when vaccine supplies are limited or delayed, ACIP makes recommendations regarding priority groups for vaccination.

People who should get vaccinated each year are:

- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Health care workers
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

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