

# 2009 H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Bulletin

## How Dangerous is the new H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

- The 2009 H1N1 flu has not been more dangerous than the regular seasonal flu.
- Symptoms are similar to the seasonal flu—fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea

## Who is at risk to get seriously sick from the flu?

- Pregnant Women
- People with chronic diseases like asthma, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, or heart disease.
- Children and young adults get sick with the new flu more than older people.

## Does the seasonal flu vaccine protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu?

No. A separate vaccine for the new H1N1 flu is needed for protection and may be ready around mid-October. Your primary care doctor or pediatrician will have more information once the H1N1 vaccine is available.

## Should my child still get the seasonal flu vaccine?

Yes. We recommend it for all children over 6 months of age and young adults. Primary care givers for children under 6 months of age should also be vaccinated. Get your child the seasonal flu vaccine as early as possible.

## Can my child get the seasonal flu vaccine and H1N1 vaccine at the same time?

Yes. Inactivated 2009 H1N1 vaccine can be administered at the same visit as any other vaccine, including pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine. Live 2009 H1N1 vaccine can be administered at the same visit as any other live or inactivated vaccine EXCEPT seasonal live attenuated influenza vaccine.

## If my child had H1N1 flu earlier in the year, does he or she still need the vaccine?

**People who had an illness confirmed by rRT-PCR to be 2009 H1N1 virus earlier in 2009 can be considered to be immune and do not need to be vaccinated this year.** However, most people with respiratory illnesses since this spring have not had testing with the rRT-PCR test, which is the only test that can confirm an H1N1. Although people who were not tested might have been infected with 2009 H1N1, they cannot be certain since many pathogens can cause respiratory illness. These people should get the 2009 H1N1 vaccine as recommended for their age and risk group. Even if a person had H1N1 earlier in 2009, being vaccinated will not do any harm.

## Is the H1N1 flu vaccine safe?

Yes, says the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The 2009 H1N1 vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccines are made and tested the same way. The seasonal flu vaccines have a long record of safety and effectiveness.

## Will there be 1 or 2 doses for the H1 N1 flu vaccine?

- Children younger than 10 years of age will need 2 doses, at least 1 month apart
- Children 10 years and older and adults will need 1 dose.

## Who should get the H1N1 vaccine first?

- Children and young adults, 6 months—24 years old
- People who live with or care for children under 6 months of age (e.g. siblings, parents and daycare providers)
- Pregnant women
- Health care workers and emergency medical services workers
- People age 25-64 years with chronic health conditions.

## What else can I do to protect my family from the flu?

Every one in your family should:

- Wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough, sneeze, or blow their nose. Alcohol based hand cleansers also work well.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or into their elbow or shoulder. Throw the tissue in the trash after they use it.
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth.



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### What should I do if my child has fever and other flu symptoms?

Most people should recover from the new H1N1 flu without needing medical care. Here's what you need to do:

- Keep your sick child at home until at least 24 hours after resolution of fever (without the use of fever-reducers).
- Call the school or daycare to notify that your child has flu symptoms.
- Do not take your child to the mall, grocery store, or any other place where he or she might expose others to the flu.
- Do not give aspirin or aspirin containing products to children 18 years of age and younger. This increases the risk of Reye syndrome, a serious condition.
- Children older than 6 months can take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin) for relief of fever.
- Do not give over the counter cold medicines to children younger than 4 years of age.

### What should I do if my child has a chronic illness and flu symptoms?

- A chronic illness (like asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis and others) can make your child's flu more severe.
- Contact your doctor or specialist immediately for advice about your child's unique case. This is important to do right away because antiviral medications (TamiFlu) used to treat flu work best when started within 2 days of getting sick.

### Does my child need to see a pediatrician for flu care?

- Call your pediatrician if your child's flu symptoms get more severe or if you are worried about your child's illness.
- Call your doctor if your child is younger than 2 years and not drinking enough fluids.
- Your child does not have to be tested for the new H1N1 flu unless he or she needs to stay in the hospital.
- Your doctor may prescribe a drug called TamiFlu, an anti-viral medication used to treat the flu.

### When should I take my child with flu symptoms to the emergency room?

If you have a true medical emergency, then take your child to the nearest emergency room. If your child shows any of these warning signs, then seek emergency care:

- Fast breathing or difficulty breathing
- Blue or grey skin color
- Not waking up or interacting
- Being so irritable that he or she does not want to be held
- Not urinating or no tears when crying

### Do I need a doctor's note to get my child back to school after being out sick with the flu?

The Chicago Public School's are not requiring a doctor's note for your child to return to school. Contact your child's school to determine what your specific school district requirements are.

### One of my family members is sick with flu-like symptoms. Do I need to keep my child out of school? Does my whole family need treatment?

- If your child is not sick, then he or she can go to school.
- Family members who are not sick usually do not need treatment
- The best thing you can do is limit contact with the sick person as much as possible
- Make sure everyone in your family washes his or her hands often, especially after coughing, sneezing or blowing his or her nose.

### Do I need to cancel a regular follow up appointment with Dr. Boas?

- Please keep your appointment unless your child has the flu.
- If you need to cancel, please call to reschedule as soon as possible. Your child with fever and other flu symptoms should stay home until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever (without fever reducing medicine).
- If your child is sick but you must keep the appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can get a mask for your child as soon as you arrive. Place the mask over your child's nose and mouth.
- If you have any questions about whether to keep or cancel your appointment, call our office ahead of time.

### Where can I find the latest information on the H1N1 flu?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hotline: 800-CDC-INFO, answered by operators 24 hours/every day
- [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/)
- Office of Minority Health (resources in other languages like Chinese, Arabic, Russian and others): [www.omhrc.gov](http://www.omhrc.gov)
- Call our office at 847-998-3434.

**Call our office at 847-998-3434 for availability**