



H1N1 Flu Virus

What is H1N1 Flu Virus?

Swine Influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses cause high levels of illness but low death rates in pigs. Swine influenza viruses may circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans.

Is this H1N1 Flu Virus contagious?

CDC has determined that this virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. This virus spreads easily between people.

What are symptoms of H1N1 Flu Virus in Humans?

Some people with swine flu report the following symptoms:

- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Besides these symptoms, typical seasonal influenza symptoms are often present. These include:

- Fever
- Lethargy
- Lack of Appetite
- Coughing

What should I do if I have these symptoms?

See your healthcare provider if you are very sick with the symptoms identified AND have recently traveled to a part of the world where the H1N1 flu has been reported (Mexico; San Diego and Imperial County, California; Guadalupe County/ San Antonio, Texas). Be sure to let your doctor know when and where you were traveling and whether you visited any farms or open-air markets. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site for travel health information: www.cdc.gov/travel/.

How does H1N1 Flu Virus spread?

Influenza viruses can be directly transmitted from pigs to people and from people to pigs. Human infection with flu viruses from pigs are most likely to occur when people are in close proximity to infected pigs, such as in pig barns and livestock exhibits housing pigs at fairs.

Human-to-human transmission of the H1N1 flu virus occurs in the same way seasonal flu transmits. This is mainly through coughing or sneezing of people infected with the influenza virus. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What can I do now to reduce the risk of illness?

By practicing good hygiene habits, you can help stop germs from spreading.

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when coughing and sneezing
- Wash your hands often
- Stay home when you are sick
- Keep your hands away from your mouth and nose

Do all you can to improve your health.

The healthier you are, the more resistant your body is to disease. It's a better time than ever to quit smoking, improve your eating habits, exercise regularly, and get regular medical checkups and recommended immunizations.

Are there medicines to treat H1N1 Flu Virus?

Yes. CDC recommends the use of oseltamivir or zanamivir for the treatment and/or prevention of infection with the H1N1 influenza virus. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within 2 days of symptoms). If seen by a health care provider in the first 48 hours of symptoms, medication may be prescribed that can lessen the symptoms and shorten the duration of illness.

What should I do if I get sick?

Individuals who experience the above symptoms should contact their physician, who will determine whether testing or treatment is needed.

Persons with H1N1 influenza are considered to be very contagious and should avoid contact with people until at least 24 hours after their fever is gone (without using fever-reducing medications) to keep from spreading the illness to others.

Can I get H1N1 Flu Virus from eating or preparing pork?

No. H1N1 influenza viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.