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H1N1 Influenza

What is H1N1 Influenza?

H1N1 flu is a respiratory disease caused by type A influenza. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that the swine influenza A (H1N1) virus currently in the news is contagious and is spreading from human to human.

How does H1N1 flu spread?

Human to human spread of this 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 of people with influenza. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever (100° or higher), cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with the H1N1 virus.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- 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 get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Contact your health care provider for information about available vaccines.

To keep the flu from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home. Please keep your child at home if he/she has a fever of 100° or higher.

For further information on swine flu, please visit the OCDE website at <http://fluinformation.ocde.us>