



2009 H1N1 AND SEASONAL INFLUENZA: WHAT TO DO FOR PERSONS WHO ARE SICK WITH FLU

What are the symptoms of flu?

- Common symptoms of both H1N1 and seasonal influenza include fever with cough or sore throat, and sometimes runny nose, body aches, headache, vomiting or diarrhea.

What should I do if I think I have the flu?

- Please stay at home, except to get medical care or for other necessities, so you can recover and prevent others from getting ill. Avoid travel and do not return to work, school, social events, or public gatherings until your fever has been gone for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicines.
- Drink plenty of clear fluids and rest as much as possible. Take medications such as Tylenol® and ibuprofen for relief of fever and symptoms as needed. Do **not** give aspirin or products that contain aspirin to children under 18 years of age who may have flu.
- Cover your coughs or sneezes with disposable tissues, and discard in the trash. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as much as possible, as germs are spread this way.
- Have everyone in the household wash hands with soap and water often. Hand sanitizer can be used when soap and water are not nearby.
- Do not share utensils or personal items with others. Wash dishes with hot soapy water.
- Avoid close contact with other people, to keep from making others sick.
- When close contact with other people in the household is unavoidable, the ill person can wear a surgical mask to prevent spread. Masks can be purchased at pharmacy stores.

Does everyone with flu need to be tested or treated for flu?

- Most persons with flu with experience mild symptoms and recover within a week without needing to be seen by a doctor. Testing or treatment is not needed or recommended unless you have medical conditions which place you at higher risk for complications from influenza (see below), or unless you are experiencing more severe illness.

When should I see my doctor?

- Contact your doctor as soon as possible to ask for advice about antiviral medications if the ill person or any well household member is at **high risk** for more severe disease from influenza.
- People at higher risk for flu complications include: persons younger than 2 years or older than 65 years, pregnant women, and persons of any age who have chronic medical conditions (such as asthma or other lung disease, diabetes, immunosuppression, cancer, neurologic conditions, and heart, liver or kidney disease).
- Whenever possible, *call* your health care provider for concerns or advice about whether you need to be seen. Doctor's notes are not needed to return to work or school after a flu illness.

When should I seek care at an emergency room or urgent care center?

If you experience any of the following warning signs, please seek medical attention right away:

- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Confusion or extreme weakness
- Not drinking enough fluids or Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms which improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Warning signs in children may include the above and also: Fast breathing, bluish skin color, not waking up or not interacting, or being so irritable that the child does not want to be held.

Where can I find more information? Call the 2-1-1 State hotline for advice about flu or

- Visit the following websites: www.cdc.gov, www.texasflu.org, or www.dallascounty.org