

Novel H1N1 Fact Sheet



What is nH1N1 Flu and how is it spread?

Novel H1N1 (sometimes referred to as “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. It can be spread by coughing, sneezing, touching something with flu viruses on it, such as a tissue or a door knob, and then touching your mouth, eyes, or nose.

Is there medicine I can take if I become ill with nH1N1?

Some doctors may prescribe Tamiflu® or Relenza® for the treatment of nH1N1. These drugs fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, these drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, these drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within two days of symptoms).

Novel H1N1 Vaccine

When Can I Get the nH1N1 vaccine?

The 2009 nH1N1 vaccine is expected to be available later in the fall.

How Many Doses of nH1N1 do I need?

People over 10 years old will need to receive 1 dose of nH1N1. Children 10 years old and under will need to receive 2 doses of nH1N1, 1 month apart.

Who Should Receive the nH1N1 vaccine?

Everyone should receive the shot, however when the vaccine first becomes available, certain target high risk groups should receive the vaccine first because of their high risk to life threatening complications.

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have chronic health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza, such as asthma, and diabetes.

Will a seasonal flu shot protect me from nH1N1?

No, you need to receive the nH1N1 vaccine to receive protection from nH1N1. A seasonal flu shot will protect from this season’s flu strains.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of nH1N1 flu are similar to those of the regular influenza: fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, sneezing and coughing. Some who have been infected with the nH1N1 flu also reported having a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

What do I do if I have these symptoms?

- Stay home if you get sick and avoid close contact with others.
- Get plenty of rest, drink fluids, and take fever reducing medications if needed.
- If you have mild symptoms, do not call your health care provider or visit the hospital emergency room.
- In most cases people with nH1N1 flu will get better without medical attention within 5 to 7 days.
- If you are in a target high risk group for complications of nH1N1, call your health care provider and follow your provider’s advice.
- Wait to be around people until your fever has been gone for 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medications.



How Can I Avoid Getting Sick?

- Get vaccinated with both the seasonal flu vaccine and nH1N1 vaccine.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Stay away from people who are sick (especially if they have fever, cough and a sore throat).
- Get plenty of sleep, exercise regularly, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.

For more information, please visit www.HoustonH1N1.org