



## Questions and Answers about the 2009 H1N1 Flu Virus (Swine Flu) in New Jersey

### How is the 2009 H1N1 flu virus spread?

H1N1 is thought to spread in the same way as seasonal flu. Flu viruses spread from person to person when someone with the flu coughs or sneezes. People may get infected by touching something, such as a surface or object, with flu virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes. Infected people may be able to make others sick from one day before symptoms start to 7 days after they start. Children may be able to make others sick up to 10 days after onset of symptoms.

### What are the symptoms?

Flu caused by the 2009 H1N1 virus is like seasonal flu. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and tiredness. Symptoms may begin as early as 1-4 days after having contact with the 2009 H1N1 virus.

### How serious is the 2009 H1N1 virus?

Flu viruses are always changing. Illness caused by seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 virus can vary from mild to severe. To date, most of the cases we've seen in the U.S. have been mild. People are being cared for at home and are recovering without treatment.

### Are there medications to treat the 2009 H1N1 virus?

Most people sick with 2009 H1N1 do not need treatment with antiviral medication. But, the CDC recommends treating people who are in the hospital with 2009 H1N1 and those who are at high risk for flu complications with antiviral medication.

### What do I do if I feel sick or think I may have been exposed?

Call your health care provider and he will decide whether you need to be seen in the office. For most people, testing and treatment for the 2009 H1N1 virus are not necessary. If you get sick with the flu, you should stay home for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicines). While you are sick, limit close contact with others to keep from infecting them.

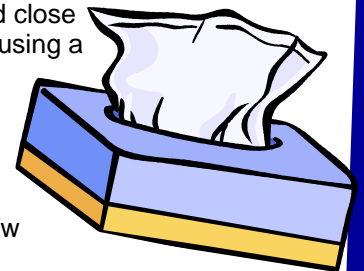
### What should I do to take care of myself while sick at home?

You should follow any advice from your health care

provider. It is important to get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids. You can help prevent others from becoming ill by limiting close contact with others and not sharing personal items such as toothbrushes or eating utensils.

### How do I protect myself from getting sick?

To prevent from getting ill, avoid close contact (less than 6 feet) with any sick person as much as possible. If you are caring for a sick person and close contact is necessary, consider using a mask. Wash your hands with soap and water (or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available). If you become sick, you should stay home and follow the same advice listed above.



### Will the seasonal flu vaccine protect me from the 2009 H1N1 virus?

No, the current 2009 H1N1 virus is a new virus and was not included in past flu vaccines. To protect against the 2009 H1N1 virus, you need the vaccine that has been made for this purpose. However, it is still important to get a seasonal flu vaccine every year to protect against seasonal influenza.

### Does having a mild case of the 2009 H1N1 virus mean I can't get it again?

Flu viruses are constantly changing. If you had the flu in the past, you still may get the flu in the future.

### What if I have a chronic disease?

People with certain chronic diseases, especially those involving the lungs or immune system, are at an increased risk of medical complications if they do get the flu.

### Where can I find more information?

Visit the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services 2009 H1N1 web site at <http://nj.gov/health/er/h1n1/> or the Centers for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu).

