

Health Advisory: H1N1 (Swine) Flu and You

Updated May 6, 2009

Are you aware of an outbreak of H1N1 (swine) flu? First, don't panic. It's still flu season in Arizona and there are other illnesses at this time of the year. So if you get sick, it doesn't automatically mean it is H1N1 (swine) flu.

Consider your symptoms (which mean how you are feeling). The symptoms of H1N1 (swine) flu in people are similar to the symptoms of general flu and include fever (temperature above 100.5 degrees), cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue (feeling tired). Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 (swine) flu may worsen other chronic medical conditions you might have such as asthma.

What Should I Do If I Get Sick?

If you become sick with flu-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, contact your doctor. Your doctor will help you decide whether flu testing or treatment is needed.

If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

If you become sick and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care.

In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

What You Can Do To Stay Healthy And Avoid The Flu

There are everyday actions people can take to stay healthy:

- 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 hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people:

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

Do You Need More Information?

In Arizona, the Community Information and Referral agency has opened a public inquiry hotline to receive questions about H1N1 (swine) flu from the community. You may call 602-263-8856 or 800-352-3792, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to speak about general questions you may have about H1N1 (swine) flu.