



# FLU FACTS

Understand and stop the spread of H1N1 flu and the seasonal flu

**FACT: H1N1 or “swine flu” is a type of flu virus that makes people sick and can easily spread between people.** Most people who have been sick from H1N1 flu or the seasonal flu are able to recover without medical care. Others become very sick and end up at the hospital, and some have died.

**FACT: H1N1 flu spreads easily.** Coughing or sneezing by people with the flu can spread the virus. Sometimes people may become infected by touching a surface or object with flu viruses on it and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

**FACT: It's up to you to stop the flu by making sure to:**



## GET VACCINATED

Get vaccinated. You need two different vaccines to be protected from the flu this year: One to protect against H1N1 flu and another to prevent the seasonal flu.



## COVER YOUR COUGH

Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue, sleeve or the inside of your arm to cover your mouth and nose.



## WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can also be effective.



## STAY AT HOME WHEN YOU'RE SICK

Stay at home for 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

Avoid spreading germs. People can get sick by touching a surface or object with flu viruses on it and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

**FACT: The symptoms of H1N1 flu include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.** Some people with H1N1 flu have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

**FACT: It is safe to get vaccinated.** The H1N1 flu vaccine has been made using the same processes and manufacturers that have been making seasonal flu vaccines for more than 30 years. Flu vaccines are safe and effective.

**FACT: It's not too late to get vaccinated.** Cases of the seasonal flu usually peak in February or later, so getting vaccinated even in the winter or spring can still protect you. H1N1 flu is new, so there is no way of knowing when cases will peak. It's best to get vaccinated against both viruses to get the best protection.



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**FACT: Pregnant women should get vaccinated.** During a normal pregnancy, lungs compress and the body's natural defenses weaken. Vaccines during pregnancy have shown to be safe, and pregnant women have safely received flu shots for many years. Pregnant women can get both the H1N1 flu and the seasonal flu shots at any stage of pregnancy. Pregnant women should get injectable flu vaccines, not the nasal spray vaccines. Flu vaccines are also safe and highly recommended for breastfeeding moms.

**FACT: Children younger than 10 years of age are recommended to receive two doses of the H1N1 flu vaccine,** but may need only one dose of the seasonal flu vaccine if they have been vaccinated in past flu seasons.

**FACT: There are some people who should not get flu vaccines without first consulting a doctor or nurse.** These include people who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs or have had a severe reaction to flu vaccines in the past, children younger than six months of age, and people who developed Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) within six weeks of getting a flu vaccine.

People who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever should wait until they recover to get vaccinated. If you have a mild cold or other illness, there is usually no need to wait to get vaccinated. Also, be sure to tell the person giving you the vaccine if you have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.

**FACT: There are medicines to treat H1N1 flu and the seasonal flu.** Prescription antiviral drugs can reduce the severity of flu symptoms and shorten the time you are sick by one or two days. But it's best to prevent the flu by getting vaccinated.

**FACT: There are symptoms that require immediate medical attention.** Anyone who has them should get medical care right away:

## In children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting with others
- 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

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



For more information, visit [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)  
or call the flu hotline at [1-888-865-0564](tel:1-888-865-0564).

