



# WHAT IS THE FLU & HOW TO STOP IT

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

## WHAT IS H1N1 FLU?

The H1N1 flu (sometimes called “swine flu”) is a virus that has similar symptoms to the seasonal flu. These symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people with H1N1 flu have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. If you have these symptoms, please contact your doctor or nurse.

The H1N1 flu is highly contagious. Flu viruses are spread through coughing, sneezing or having contact with people who have the flu. Sometimes people may become infected by touching a surface contaminated with the flu virus and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

## HOW TO PREVENT THE FLU

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.



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When vaccine availability is plentiful, getting vaccinated is a good idea for most everyone. Meanwhile, the target groups for vaccine – which include those individuals at highest risk – are different.

## The following people should get the H1N1 flu vaccine:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or provide care for children younger than six months of age
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel
- People between six months and 24 years of age
- People 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk because of chronic health disorders, such as asthma, diabetes or a weakened immune system

## The following people should get the seasonal flu vaccine:

- Pregnant women
- People between six months and 19 years of age
- People age 50 and older
- People of any age with chronic health disorders, such as asthma, diabetes or a weakened immune system
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from the flu, including health care workers, anyone living with or caring for a child under five, or an adult over 50 years of age

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.

## There are some people who should not get any flu vaccine without first consulting a health care provider. These include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs;
- People who have had a severe reaction to a flu vaccination;
- People who developed Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) within six weeks of getting any flu vaccine previously;
- Children younger than six months of age (flu vaccine is not approved for this age group); and
- 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 a flu shot. Also, be sure to tell the person giving you the vaccine if you have any severe allergies. Pregnant or breastfeeding women can get inactivated, injectable H1N1 flu or seasonal flu vaccines, but not the nasal spray.



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).

