



Pandemic H1N1 flu

www.flu.oregon.gov

Flu facts

Introduction

- Pandemic H1N1 (originally referred to as “swine” flu) is a respiratory disease caused by type A H1N1 influenza virus.



- Human cases of pandemic H1N1 influenza started showing up in the U.S. in late March 2009, and quickly spread throughout the country and the world. In June 2009, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic of the new virus.

Risks

- Infections with pandemic H1N1 flu can be mild to severe. Most cases in the U.S. have been similar to seasonal flu.
- Certain groups are at increased risk of complications from pandemic H1N1. These include pregnant women, infants, children and young adults up to 24 years of age; and those with chronic health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, or compromised immunity.
- People in these groups who develop a high fever with cough, sore throat, or muscle aches—or parents of young children with these symptoms, should call their health care provider.
- Like other influenza illness, pandemic H1N1 flu spreads from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people who are sick.
- You cannot get pandemic H1N1 flu from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

Symptoms

- The symptoms of pandemic H1N1 are similar to the symptoms of regular flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also experienced diarrhea and vomiting.

- Like seasonal flu, pandemic H1N1 may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions. Most deaths have been in people with underlying medical conditions.



- Seek emergency medical care if you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs:

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

- 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.



Treatment

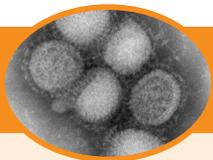
- Most people with pandemic H1N1 get better with bed rest, good nutrition, and use of over-the-counter medications to relieve symptoms.
- In specific circumstances, antiviral medications may be helpful in reducing symptoms or preventing the spread of disease. Currently, this would only be for hospitalized patients, individuals with chronic health conditions who are at high risk of complications, or close contacts of those at high risk.
- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in the body.
- If treatment is started within two days of the onset of symptoms, antiviral drugs can help prevent serious flu complications, may make illness milder and help patients feel better faster.



Prevention

- Vaccine to protect against pandemic H1N1 is currently under development and is expected to be ready in the fall.

- Regular flu vaccines do not generally protect against pandemic H1N1 flu. However, seasonal influenza is a serious illness that kills approximately 36,000 people in the U.S. each year. It is important to get vaccinated against the flu every year.
- There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or 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 hand cleaners are also effective.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - Always stay home from work or school when you're sick, and limit contact with others to keep them from getting sick.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.



For more information

Oregon Public Health Division
www.flu.oregon.gov

Oregon Public Health Hotline
1-800-978-3040

Oregon county health departments
www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/lhd/lhd.shtml

Federal pandemic H1N1 flu information
www.flu.gov

World Health Organization:
www.who.in

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