



# Questions and Answers about Novel H1N1 Flu

## Wake County Human Services

Revised 8-20-09

**Question: What is novel H1N1 flu?**

**Answer:** Novel H1N1 flu (formerly known as swine flu) is a new strain of flu virus that is being seen in humans by health officials in the U.S. and other countries. Novel H1N1 flu is spread from person to person. Younger people seem to be more affected by novel H1N1 flu.

**Question: How does novel H1N1 flu spread?**

**Answer:** Novel H1N1 flu seems to be spread when

- An infected person coughs or sneezes, putting germs into the air
- People touch a surface that has novel H1N1 flu germs and then touch their mouth, eyes or nose

**Question: Can you get novel H1N1 flu from eating pork?**

**Answer:** No. This virus is not spread through food.

**Question: Is there a vaccine for novel H1N1 flu?**

**Answer:** The U.S. government is working with vaccine manufacturers to produce a vaccine to protect against novel H1N1 flu. It is hoped that the vaccine will be available in the fall, however the time it takes to make the vaccine and vaccine safety testing can affect when it is ready.

**Question: Can novel H1N1 flu be treated?**

**Answer:** Yes. Antiviral medicines can help make the illness milder and shorter. These medications are prescribed by a doctor and must be taken early (within 2 days of symptoms) to work their best. However, not everybody needs treatment. Your health care provider will decide whether treatment is right for you.

**Question: How do I protect myself and my family?**

**Answer:** There are many things you can do (and teach children to do) -

- Wash your hands often. Use soap and water and scrub for 15-20 seconds. Alcohol based hand cleaners can be used if you don't have soap and water.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues. Throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve. If you cough or sneeze into your hands, wash them right away.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid sick people. Stay home if you are sick. Keep sick children home from school or childcare.
- Stay as healthy as possible. Get plenty of sleep, drink plenty of fluids, be physically active, eat healthy foods and manage stress.

**Question: What are the symptoms of novel H1N1 flu?**

**Answer: Fever with:**

- |                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Cough                |                              |
| Sore throat          | Chills                       |
| Fatigue              | Runny or stuffy nose         |
| Headache, body aches | Sometimes vomiting, diarrhea |

**Question: What should I do if I have symptoms of novel H1N1 flu?**

**Answer:**

- Stay home for at least 24 hours after fever (100° F /37.8°C) is gone. (Fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medications.)
- Avoid close contact with others. Stay in one room and stay away from others as much as possible.
- Wear a mask when you are in close contact with others (within 6 feet). If you must leave the house, wear a mask to stop the spread of flu to others.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve. If you cough or sneeze into your hands, wash them right away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand gel right after you sneeze, cough, or throw a used tissue in the trash.
- Call or go to the doctor if your symptoms get worse.

**Information about novel H1N1 flu is changing rapidly. For additional or the most recent information:**

English and Spanish	1-800-662-7030
TTY	1-877-452-2514
Raleigh –area residents may call	855-4400
TTY	919-733-4851

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)