



Genesee County Health Department 2009 H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Information

What is the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

The H1N1 flu is a viral infection of the respiratory tract caused by the 2009 H1N1 influenza A virus. This flu is much like seasonal flu.

Who can get the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

Just like regular, seasonal flu, anyone can get the 2009 H1N1 flu virus. Updated information on influenza activity including H1N1 infections in the United States can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/index.htm>

How is the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu) virus spread?

The 2009 H1N1 flu virus is spread the same as seasonal flu. The virus is spread from person to person mainly through coughing or sneezing by people sick with the flu. You **cannot** become infected by eating pork or any pork product.

What are the signs and symptoms of the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu) in people?

Symptoms of the 2009 H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have diarrhea and vomiting.

What are the complications of the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

Complications can include pneumonia and sometimes respiratory failure. Certain people are at "high risk" of serious complications. This includes people 65 years and older, children younger than five years old, pregnant women, and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions.

What should I do if I get the flu?

If you become ill with flu-like symptoms and if you are normally healthy, you should stay home and care for yourself as you would if you had any other flu. If your flu symptoms become severe or if you have other health problems in addition to the flu, you should contact your health care provider immediately to determine if an office visit and testing or treatment are needed.

Is there treatment for the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

Your **health care provider** will determine if testing and treatment are needed. Antiviral medications prescribed by a health care provider can make you better faster and may also prevent serious complications. For treating influenza, antiviral drugs work best if started within 1-2 days of symptom onset. Remember, most people with 2009 H1N1 have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs and the same is true of seasonal flu.

Is there a vaccine for the 2009 H1N1 flu virus (swine flu)?

Yes. There is a safe and effective vaccine for the 2009 H1N1 flu virus. It is available as either a shot or as a nasal spray. The vaccine is made in the exact same way as the seasonal flu vaccine, which has been tested over and over and has an excellent safety record. If the 2009 H1N1 flu virus had been discovered a few months earlier, it would have been included in the seasonal flu vaccine, and a separate vaccine would not have been needed.

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Where can I get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine in Genesee County?

The 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine is available at some doctor's offices. Several pharmacies and all 21 school districts in Genesee County plan to offer the vaccine to the community at large. The vaccine is also available at the Genesee County Health Department. Check the Genesee County Health Department website and hotline for the most up-to-date list of all locations in Genesee County where the vaccine is available to the public.

Can anyone get the vaccine?

Yes, but maybe not when the vaccine is first available. Certain people are more at risk of getting the 2009 H1N1 flu and certain people are more at risk of flu complications. For these reasons, the vaccine may be available only for the priority groups when the supply is small.

Do I have to pay for the vaccine?

No. Your federal tax dollars are paying for the vaccine. If you get the vaccine at a public venue such as the Genesee County Health Department, a school-located clinic, or a pharmacy, you will pay no out-of-pocket cost to have the free vaccine administered to you. However, you must have your insurance information with you. Some private providers of the vaccine, such as your doctor, may charge a fee for administering the free vaccine.

How long can an infected person spread the H1N1 flu (swine flu) virus?

Usually 1 day before flu symptoms begin and up to 7 days after becoming ill. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems. People who are sick with the flu should stay away from others while they have a fever and for *at least* another 24 hours after their fever has gone away without using fever-reducing drugs.

How can I stay healthy and avoid getting the flu?

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and throw tissue in the trash immediately.
- Wash your hands often, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners (60% alcohol concentration) are effective
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs get into your body this way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people when possible.
- If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others.

What is the most effective way to wash my hands?

- Use soap and running water
- Rub your hands together vigorously for 20 seconds
- Wash all hand surfaces, including:
 - Backs of your hands
 - Wrist area
 - Between your fingers
 - Under your fingernails
- Rinse your hands well
- Dry your hands with disposable paper towel
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of using your clean hands

Where can I get more information about the 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu)?

Contact the Genesee County Health Department H1N1 Flu Information Hotline at (810) 257-3887 or visit the Genesee County Health Department's website at www.gchd.us and click on the H1N1 Flu Information & Updates link on the left side of the screen.