

Community Health—H1N1 Update

H1N1 or "swine flu" is a new flu virus first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person to person the same way that the regular seasonal flu virus is spread. The virus is referred to as "swine flu" because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to flu viruses that normally occur in pigs in North America, although further study has shown that it is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs.

Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Many people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health and to help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza:

- Cover your nose and mouth with 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. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

If you are sick with a flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)

There is no vaccine available at this time to protect against 2009 H1N1 virus. However, a 2009 H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public later in the fall. As always, a vaccine will be available to protect against seasonal influenza.

For more information about H1N1 click on the links below.

[Anoka County--H1N1](#)

[MN Department of Health--H1N1](#)

[FLU.gov](#)

[Centers for Disease Control--H1N1](#)