

Health Alert

H1N1 (swine) FLU

What is H1N1 (Swine) Flu ?

H1N1 (previously called “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. The virus was originally thought to be a new flu virus from pigs. It has been discovered that the H1N1 virus is a mixture of influenza genetic material from pigs, birds, and humans. The virus is contagious and spreads from human to human contact, just as regular seasonal flu. Mexico has been affected the worst. It had the earliest cases and the most deaths. It is now causing illness in at least 21 countries at close to Pandemic level.

How can I try to protect myself from getting the flu?

1. **Wash your hands.**
2. Stay in good health, meaning get plenty of rest, be physically active, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.
3. Try not to touch surfaces that might be contaminated with the flu.
4. Avoid contact with people who are sick.
5. **Cover your cough** or sneeze with a tissue, or cough and sneeze into your elbow.
6. **Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes** with your hands. This is the best way to protect yourself from getting the flu.

How do you know if you have the flu?

If you suspect you or someone you know might have the flu, look out for these signs and symptoms:

- Fever, sore throat and cough** (all three)
- Other flu associated symptoms such as muscle pains, headaches, nausea or vomiting (sometimes diarrhea).

Also look for relatively rapid worsening of symptoms and clustering in a family or workplace

If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others. Get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids. If symptoms worsen rapidly, please see your medical provider.

- **Any difficulty breathing** or change in the ability to think should be treated in a hospital.
- **Mild influenza-like illness** (most cases) often become better with supportive care at home

For current updates and information please visit the following websites:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [linked to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>]

American Red Cross [linked to http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/domestic%20programs/pandemic_flu_home_care_brochure.pdf]

For Appointments, please call 323-644-3888