



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Pike County General Health District

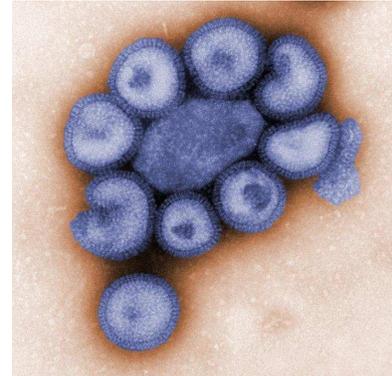
H1N1 Influenza

What is H1N1 Influenza?

H1N1 (referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. Other countries, including Mexico and Canada, have reported people sick with this new virus. This virus is spreading from person to person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

Symptoms and Associated Infections

H1N1 flu virus infection can cause a wide range of symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Severe disease with pneumonia, respiratory failure and even death is possible with H1N1 flu infection. Sometimes bacterial infections may occur at the same time as or after infection with influenza viruses and lead to pneumonias, ear infections, or sinus infections.



How Influenza Spreads

The main way that influenza viruses are thought to spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else’s mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

Who is at Risk?

Although there is still much that remains unknown about H1N1 influenza, it appears that this strain may be more prevalent and/or severe in different groups of people than seasonal influenza. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have suggested that pregnant women, individuals birth to 24 years old, and people 24 to 64 years old with chronic health conditions may have increased risk for severe illness and complications associated with H1N1 influenza. However, it is important to know that everyone is at risk for contracting the H1N1 influenza virus and should take steps (see reverse side) to protect themselves and others.

Information Provided Here is Based on Current CDC Recommendations as of August 12, 2009

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Protect Yourself, Your Family, and Your Community

- Stay informed.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. If no tissue is available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with a flu-like illness, stay home until you have been free of a fever or signs of a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, except to seek medical care or for other necessities.
- Learn more about how to take care of someone who is ill in the document *How to Care For a Sick Person in Your Home*.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds, and other social distancing measures.
- If you don't have one yet, consider creating a "Stay Home Kit"

Stay Home Kit

- 2 week supply of non-perishable food (and a manual can opener)
- 2 week supply of water (1 gallon per person per day)
- First Aid kit containing thermometer, fever reducers (such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or aspirin), cough/cold medications, anti-nausea medications, anti-diarrhea medications, band-aids, antibiotic ointment, etc.
- Sports drinks or other beverages that contain electrolytes to treat dehydration
- Back-up supply of prescription medications
- Supplies for babies, elderly individuals, or others in your household with special needs
(Don't forget your pets)
- Tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, and trash bags
- Hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies
- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
- List of emergency contacts, important family documents, and cash.
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each family member

Where to Stay Informed

You can monitor the following websites for information on H1N1 Influenza:

- www.pike-health.org (for general and local information)
- www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu (for current recommendations for the United States)
- www.flu.gov (influenza information clearinghouse)

Please be aware that local information will also be disseminated through area newspapers and radio stations.

For More Information Contact:

Pike County General Health District @ www.pike-health.org or (740)947-7721