



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Pike County General Health District

2009-2010

H1N1 Information

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. This virus is spreading from person to person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

Symptoms

H1N1 flu virus infection can cause a wide range of symptoms, including:

- * **fever**
- * **cough**
- * **sore throat**
- * **body aches**
- * **headache**
- * **chills**
- * **fatigue**

Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe.

Associated Infections

Severe disease with pneumonia, respiratory failure and even death is possible with H1N1 flu infection. At times 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**
- **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 H1N1 and should take steps to protect themselves and others.

What You Can Do

Cover Your Cough

with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash immediately

Wash Your Hands Often

with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. You can use alcohol-based sanitizers as well.

Avoid Touching Your Eyes, Nose and Mouth

because germs spread this way

Stay Home if You are Sick

and remain home until you have been free of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours

Avoid Close Contact with Others

if they appear to be ill

Follow Public Health Advice

regarding avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.



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Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

What is Pertussis?

Pertussis (whooping cough) is a very contagious disease caused by a type of bacteria called *Bordetella pertussis*. This is one of the most common vaccine-preventable childhood diseases in the U.S. It's important to remember that both children and adults can get pertussis. Since the 1980s, there's been a dramatic increase in the number of cases of pertussis, especially among teens (10–19 years of age) and babies less than 5 months of age.

Symptoms

Pertussis starts out like the common cold, with symptoms such as runny nose, congestion, sneezing, mild cough, and fever. After 1-2 weeks severe episodes of violent, rapid coughing can occur. During these episodes, coughing occurs over and over until air is forced out of the lungs followed by a “whooping” sound as the person inhales. Symptoms are generally milder in adolescents and adults than in infants; many infants who get pertussis are infected by older siblings or parents who exhibit mild symptoms and might not even know they have the disease. This is why it is necessary for adolescents and adults to receive Tdap immunizations.

Prevention

The best way to prevent pertussis is to get vaccinated. In the U.S., the recommended pertussis vaccine for children is called DTaP. This is a safe and effective combination vaccine that protects children against three diseases: pertussis, diphtheria, and tetanus. For maximum protection against pertussis, children need five DTaP shots. The first three shots are given at 2, 4, and 6 months of age. The fourth shot is given between 15 and 18 months, and a fifth shot is given when a child enters school, at 4–6 years of age. Parents can also help protect infants by keeping them away as much as possible from anyone who has cold symptoms or is coughing.

MRSA

What is MRSA?

MRSA is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, a potentially dangerous type of staph bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics and may cause skin and other infections. You can get MRSA through direct contact with an infected person or by sharing personal items, such as towels or razors that have touched infected skin. MRSA infections are often more prevalent in athletes.

Symptoms

Most staph skin infections, including MRSA, appear as a bump or infected area on the skin that may be:

- Red
- Swollen
- Painful
- Warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other drainage
- Accompanied by a fever

Preventative Measures (especially for athletes)

- Increase hand washing
- Shower with soap after every practice or game
- Cover cuts/abrasions with a bandage until healed
- Launder personal items after each use
- Clean shared equipment after each use.
- Report and skin lesions to your coach
- Consult a health care provider for wounds that do not heal, appear to be infected or are accompanied by a fever. Inform physician that you are a sports team member.
- Do not participate in sport if your wound is oozing!

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