Influenza A (H1N1)
(formerly called "Swine Flu")

H1N1 formerly called "swine flu" is a new influenza virus causing sickness in people. The H1N1 virus is different from seasonal influenza viruses. However, the H1N1 symptoms are similar to seasonal influenza and it is spread from person to person. You may be at higher risk for serious problems if you have underlying serious medical conditions. The CDC and the World Health Organization are following reported cases around the world.

CAUSES

- The flu is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- A person may become infected by touching something with the virus on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

SYMPTOMS

- Fever.
- Headache.
- Tiredness.
- Cough.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Body aches.
- Diarrhea and vomiting

These symptoms are referred to as “flu-like symptoms.” A lot of different illnesses, including the common cold, may have similar symptoms.

DIAGNOSIS

- There are tests that can tell if you have the H1N1 virus.
- Confirmed cases of H1N1 will be reported to the state or local health department.
- A doctor's exam may be needed to tell whether you have an infection that is a complication of the flu.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Stay informed. Visit the CDC website for current recommendations. Visit www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/. You may also call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).
- Get help early if you develop any of the above symptoms.
- If you are at high risk from complications of the flu, talk to your caregiver as soon as you develop flu-like symptoms. Those at higher risk for complications include:
  - People 65 years or older.
  - People with chronic medical conditions.
  - Pregnant women.
  - Young children.
- Your caregiver may recommend antiviral medicine to help treat the flu.
- If you get the flu, get plenty of rest, drink enough water and fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow, and avoid using alcohol or tobacco.
- You may take over-the-counter medicine to relieve the symptoms of the flu if your caregiver approves. (Never give aspirin to children or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms, particularly fever).

TREATMENT

- If you do get sick, antiviral drugs are available. These drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. Treatment should start soon after illness starts. It is only effective if taken within the first day of becoming ill. Only your caregiver can prescribe antiviral medication.

PREVENTION

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your arm when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based cleaners are also effective against germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. This is one way germs spread.
- Try to avoid contact with sick people. Follow public health advice regarding school closures. Avoid crowds.
- Stay home if you get sick. Limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. People infected with the H1N1 virus may be able to infect others anywhere from 1 day before feeling sick to 5-7 days after getting flu symptoms.
- An H1N1 vaccine is available to help protect against the virus. In addition to the H1N1 vaccine, you will need to be vaccinated for seasonal influenza. The H1N1 and seasonal vaccines may be given on the same day. The CDC especially recommends the H1N1 vaccine for:
  - Pregnant women.
  - People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age.
  - Health care and emergency services personnel.
  - Persons between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age.
  - People from ages 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk for H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or immune system problems.

FACEMASKS

In community and home settings, the use of facemasks and N95 respirators are not normally recommended. In certain circumstances, a facemask or N95 respirator may be used for persons at increased risk of severe illness from influenza. Your caregiver can give additional recommendations for facemask use.

IN CHILDREN, EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS THAT NEED URGENT MEDICAL CARE:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing.
- Bluish skin color.
- Not drinking enough fluids.
- Not waking up or not interacting normally.
- Being so fussy that the child does not want to be held.
- Your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.

IN ADULTS, EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS THAT NEED URGENT MEDICAL CARE:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen.
- Sudden dizziness.
- Confusion.
- Severe or persistent vomiting.
- Bluish color.
- You have a oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Flu-like symptoms improve but return with fever and worse cough.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

You or someone you know is experiencing any of the above symptoms. When you arrive at the emergency center, tell the reception staff that you think you have the flu. You may be asked to wear a mask and/or sit in a secluded area to protect others from getting sick.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Some of this information courtesy of the CDC.

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