

H1N1 Virus/Swine Flu



Many cases of the H1N1/Swine Flu virus have been reported throughout the United States. Cases of H1N1 are expected to increase exponentially in the fall and spring.

What are the symptoms of the H1N1 virus?

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include:

- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- fatigue

A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported **fever, diarrhea and vomiting**.

How does the H1N1 virus spread?

Spread of the H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What can I do, as an educator, to prevent the spread of the H1N1 virus?

- Consider altering policies on missed classes and examinations** so that student's academic concerns do not prevent them from staying home when ill or prompt them to return to class while still symptomatic.
- Most people with H1N1 have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs** and the same is true of seasonal flu. However, **some people are more likely to get flu complications and they should talk to a health care provider** about whether they need to be examined if they get flu symptoms this season.
- Early on, get vaccinated against the seasonal flu (www.flucliniclocator.org).**
- Get vaccinated against the H1N1 virus **only** if you are at high risk for infection** (the CDC identifies the following high risk populations: pregnant women, people who live with or provide care for infants younger than 6 months (e.g., parents, siblings, and day care providers), health care and emergency medical services personnel, people 6 months through 24 years of age, and, people 25 years through 64 years of age who have certain medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications.
- Be aware that Atlantic Cape's Facilities Management Team has established schedules for the cleaning and sanitization of high-touch surfaces** (doorknobs, elevator buttons, bathrooms, etc.) Contact Facilities Management (609-343-5127) if you find that a high-touch surface requires additional attention.
- Remind health care profession students to follow infection control guidance for health care workers (www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/clinicians).**

- g. Monitor student attendance.** Employee and student attendance patterns are one of the important indicators of influenza.
- h. Stay home if you are sick.** If you have symptoms of influenza-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). Keep away from others as much as possible. **If you a member of a high-risk population (d.), seek medical attention.**
- i. Employees and students who are well but who have an ill family member at home with novel H1N1 flu can go to work as usual. These persons should monitor their health every day, notify their supervisor of the illness at home, and stay home if they become ill.** Persons who have an underlying medical condition or who are pregnant should call their health care provider for advice, because they might need to receive influenza antiviral drugs to prevent illness.
- j. Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- k. Wash your hands often** with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

What do I do if I contract the H1N1 virus?

- Stay home if you are sick. If you have symptoms of influenza-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). Keep away from others as much as possible. If you are a member of a high-risk population (see above “d”), seek medical attention.
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.
- Dishes can be done in dishwasher or with hot soapy water.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Have everyone in the household wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

For more information visit:
www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/qa.htm
www.atlantic.edu/hr/index.htm