

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza Update

This update is to remind the CSCC community that the H1N1 flu pandemic is still a world-wide concern and a resurgence of illness due to this virus is expected in the Fall. You should continue to be vigilant about the symptoms and prevention of the flu.

What are the Symptoms?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to many types of flu and include rapid onset of **fever, chills, muscle and joint aches, fatigue, sore throat, cough, runny nose, and headache**. Fever may not always be present.

How is it Spread?

Like other types of flu, H1N1 can be spread:

- From **person-to-person** through droplets that are released when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- When one **touches** their **eyes, nose or mouth** after touching any objects that have been touched, coughed or sneezed on (hands, doorknobs, etc.)
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What to do if you get flu-like symptoms:

- **Stay at home and limit contact** with others.
- **Inform your team medical staff** immediately if you develop any symptoms
- **You should be isolated** from the rest of team, especially when traveling
- Sick persons can be **potentially infectious** from one day before to 7 days following illness onset
- Rest, drink extra fluids, and take acetaminophen or ibuprofen for muscle aches and headaches
- **If you are severely ill with trouble breathing, severe chest pain or if your fever remains high for more than 3-4 days, seek medical care urgently**

Preventing Infection and Spread of Virus

- **Wash your hands** regularly with **soap and water for 15-20 seconds OR use an alcohol-based hand gel**, especially after you cough or sneeze or shake hands and before and after you eat.
- **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands
- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick
- **Cover your mouth and nose** if you cough or sneeze; use a tissue or cough into your arm, not your hands.
- **Keep common surfaces clean**
- **Do not share** water bottles, beverages and food
- **Antiviral** medications are generally not used except for treating those with very severe illness or who are at high risk for flu complications
- **Seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccinations are very strongly recommended** as they are the safest and most effective way to prevent infection, to reduce the severity of your symptoms if you do get sick, and to keep from spreading the virus to others:
 - The usual seasonal flu vaccine will be available in October
 - A separate H1N1 flu vaccine will also be available, likely in November
 - More details about the vaccinations will be communicated as they become available
- **Flu vaccination facts**
 - Influenza can be a **serious problem**. Even though most people will recover from the flu without complications, getting the flu can significantly affect your ability to train and compete. Also, one sick person on the team can cause the whole team to become sick.
 - The flu shot **cannot** cause influenza because it does not contain any live virus. Mild side-effects (pain at the injection site, mild fever and aching) can occur but rarely last more than 48 hours. Severe allergic reactions are very rare. The flu shot is **effective** in preventing illness in up to 90% of healthy adults, especially if it is one of the three flu strains that the vaccine is created for. You might still get influenza, but vaccinated people usually experience only mild symptoms
 - **Contact** your team physician if you have any other questions about flu vaccinations