



## FAQ's

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### on the H1N1 Flu Virus

**Q: What should I do if I think I have the H1N1 flu?**

**A:** Contact your doctor. If you are very sick, go to your local emergency department. However, if you are not very sick, you should stay home, follow your doctor's advice and also avoid public places to prevent the spread of the flu. Be sure to contact your employer or school officials to let them know that you have the flu and are staying home. Your healthcare provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

**Q: How long does it take to get the results from an influenza test?**

**A:** Initial test results are usually available within several hours after a test is performed. However, this will only indicate whether you have the general type of influenza, not whether it is the H1N1 flu. If physicians suspect it may be the H1N1 flu, specimens will be sent to a Public Health Laboratory facility for additional testing. It can take two to three days to get results.

**Q: Are medications available to treat this flu virus?**

**A:** Yes. Both oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza) can be used to treat the H1N1 flu. These medications work best when started within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. They work by helping to limit the spread of flu virus in your body, making the overall illness milder and shorter.

**Q: Where can I get the medications?**

**A:** These medications are being provided to patients with a positive laboratory test for either H1N1 flu or seasonal flu. Your doctor can tell you how to get these medications.

**Q: Does my flu shot from last fall protect me? And should I get a flu shot if I haven't had one already?**

**A:** There is no vaccine against H1N1 flu at this time. However, cases of regular seasonal flu are still being found, and the flu vaccine will protect against seasonal flu.

**Q: How does the H1N1 virus spread?**

**A:** Flu viruses are spread mainly spread through close contact with infected people who are coughing or sneezing. It can also spread by touching someone with flu or something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

**Q: Should I be wearing a mask?**

**A:** There is no recommendation for the general public to wear a mask for protection. However, if you are coughing or sneezing and visit a healthcare provider, you will likely be given a mask to wear to protect others who are seeking medical care.

**Q: What should I do if I notice someone else with flu symptoms?**

**A:** Because the flu is spread by respiratory secretions, you should stay far enough away to avoid any droplets from a person who is coughing or sneezing, usually a distance of about six feet. If you are caring for someone who is ill, practice frequent hand-washing.

**Q: Can I get H1N1 flu from eating pork?**

**A:** No. There is no evidence that eating pork can transmit the virus. This H1N1 flu virus is transmitted by respiratory secretions — not by food. However, uncooked pork, like all uncooked meat, may harbor bacteria and other organisms that can cause illness. Pork should always be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F to kill these bacteria and other organisms.

*The information contained herein was obtained from the University of Irvine Healthcare Center*