

# Protect Yourself From H1N1 Flu

The H1N1 flu virus has appeared in Connecticut and public health officials are taking steps to limit the spread of infection. You can also do your part to protect yourself from H1N1 and be prepared in case there is an outbreak in your community. Here's how:

## Prevent the Spread of H1N1

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizers, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Cough into your sleeve or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue.
- Clean surfaces people touch a lot (telephones, doorknobs, etc.) with a disinfectant or sanitizer cloths regularly (every day or every other day).
- Avoid people who are sick unless you need to care for them.
- Stay home from work or school if you have a fever and cough or sore throat.
- Use the same judgment you would use during a normal flu season when deciding whether or not to see a health care provider. If you would not usually see a health care provider for the symptoms you are having, you do not need to see one.

## Know How to Care for the Sick

- **For children**, seek IMMEDIATE medical attention for fast or hard breathing, bluish skin, not drinking enough fluids, not waking up, extreme irritability, or high fever with rash.
- **For adults**, seek IMMEDIATE medical attention for fast or hard breathing or shortness of breath, chest or belly pain, sudden dizziness, confusion, or vomiting hard and often.
- Most people who get the flu can and should be cared for at home. For care at home,
  - limit close contact such as kissing, hugging and handshaking.
  - do not share towels, glasses, toothbrushes, clothing, blankets, etc.
  - wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after caring for a sick person.
  - consider using a facemask for close contact with a sick person (less than 6 feet).
  - launder clothes and bed linens in regular detergent and tumble dry in a hot dryer.
  - disinfect common surfaces like door knobs, refrigerator door handles, phones, and bathrooms.
  - take antiviral medicines if they are recommended, especially for young children, pregnant women, and people with chronic illness.

## Be Prepared

- Learn about the H1N1 flu. Read the "Novel H1N1 Influenza: What Connecticut Residents Need to Know" fact sheet available at [www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch](http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch).
- Get your seasonal flu vaccine. This will not protect you from H1N1 flu, but it will protect you from the seasonal flu.
- Be ready for school and business closings. Decide who will take care of your children if schools close. Make arrangements to work from home if possible.
- Minimize the need to go out if you are sick by doing the following:
  - Have a two-week supply of non-perishable food and water per person.
  - Keep on hand prescription and nonprescription drugs and health supplies used daily or often.
  - Stock up on items to treat flu symptoms such as medicines for fever (ibuprofen and acetaminophen), cold packs, blankets, humidifiers, extra water, broth soups and fruit juices.
  - Have a two-week supply of soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper and cleaning products.



**For more information on H1N1 flu and how to be prepared, visit [www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch](http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch) or call 2-1-1.**