



Taking Care of Someone with 2009 H1N1 Flu in Your Home

Things people who care for others with 2009 H1N1 flu at home should know:

- A wide range of symptoms have been identified with 2009 H1N1 flu, and those include a fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have diarrhea and vomiting. The flu is spread by the droplets from coughs and sneezes.
- Wear a surgical face mask – if you can – to help prevent spreading the flu when you are in close contact, usually six feet or less, of others.
- Keep the sick person separated from other people in the home and don't let them go to school or work. They should have only one caretaker, no visitors, and if possible, they should have their own bathroom and wear a surgical mask when in the presence of others.
- Pregnant women should not care for the sick person because they are at risk of complications if they become ill. If a pregnant woman needs to care for someone they should discuss the situation with their health care provider.
- Make sure the sick person covers their coughs and sneezes, then washes their hands to prevent the spread of the flu. Use paper towels and dispose of them, or don't share towels.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person, and wash your hands after touching those items. Keep surfaces clean and disinfect anything the sick person touches.
- You should not share eating utensils, linens or dishes with the sick person, but normal washing with soap and water will clean those items and make them safe for you to use.
- Everyone in the house should wash their hands with soap and water frequently or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Check with the sick person's doctor about any special care that could be needed if they are pregnant or have a health condition like asthma, diabetes, heart disease or emphysema.
- Keep the person home until the fever is gone for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Children may be contagious even longer.
- Give the sick person clear liquids like water, broth or sports drinks, or in the case of infants, electrolyte beverages. That will keep them from being dehydrated.
- Consult with a doctor before giving over-the-counter medicine to children and teens. Do not give aspirin to children or teenagers who have the flu because this can cause a rare but serious condition called Reye's syndrome.
- Watch for signs that could indicate the person needs medical attention, like chest pains or heavy breathing, dizziness or confusion, seizures or dehydration.

Note: Information is specific to schools. Guidance may vary in other work situations. Guidance offered August 7, 2009.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm