

Novel H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu): Questions and Answers for Child Care Centers

Cayuga County Health Department

What is novel H1N1 (swine) flu?

- H1N1 is a novel (new) influenza A virus that is transmitted by person-to-person contact.
- H1N1 causes similar illness as seasonal flu.
- Most individuals with symptoms of influenza-like illness probably have H1N1, not seasonal flu.

What are the symptoms of H1N1?

- The main symptoms are having a temperature over 100° F and a cough or sore throat.
- Additional symptoms may include headache, body aches, tiredness, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea, and vomiting.
- In many cases, the symptoms are mild and last only few days.

What can I do to prevent the spread of H1N1 in my child care center?

- Provide parents with H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccine information that encourages getting both shots.
- Plan ahead: Inform parents if your child is getting the flu, the child should stay home and not come to the Child Care Center.
- If your child does get the flu, your child cannot return to the Child Care Center until the child does not have a fever for 24 hours without having to use fever reducing medication.
- Limit children's personal contact such as handshaking, kissing, and hugging.
- Encourage frequent hand washing with warm water and soap, especially after sneezing and coughing.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick.

What should I do if children at my child care center develop flu-like symptoms?

- **If the child shows flu-like symptoms, keep the child separated from well children. Contact the parents and ask them to pick up their ill child.**
- **The child should remain at home *except* to seek medical care and should not attend any other child care settings.**
- **Allow children to return to the Center only after the child has been free of fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever control medicine.**

What are health officials recommending for those who develop flu-like symptoms?

- Stay home if you have flu-like symptoms. This will help limit the spread of the virus to others.
- Most people do not need to seek treatment for the flu. However, if you have asthma, heart disease, diabetes, or other medical problems you should CALL your health care provider for guidance.
- Do NOT go to an emergency room or urgent care facility with mild illness.
- If you have flu-like symptoms that continue or are severe, CALL your health care provider for guidance.

