



H1N1 Pandemic Flu: What You Should Know

A pandemic flu is a worldwide outbreak of illness caused by a new flu virus. Right now, a new H1N1 virus is causing a pandemic flu. Because it is a new kind of flu, many more people than usual may be sick this winter. Symptoms of the flu include fever (100°F or higher), cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people sick with the H1N1 flu have also had a runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

The flu spreads from person to person through coughing and sneezing (droplets). So it's really important to cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. The flu may also spread through contaminated surfaces. So make sure that you wash your hands often. Teach your children these important actions as well. If you, or your children, become ill with flu symptoms, avoid contact with others. You may be ill for a week or longer. Stay home from work or school, for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. Most people will recover from the flu without the need for medical care.

Flu shots are the best way to prevent getting sick. The usual seasonal flu viruses will still be causing illness. Everyone is encouraged to get a seasonal flu shot this fall. However, the seasonal flu shot is not designed to protect you from the H1N1 flu. The U.S. government is working closely with vaccine companies to make a new vaccine. This new H1N1 flu shot is expected to be ready later in the fall than the seasonal flu shot.

In the meantime, here are three things that you can do to prepare. Make a plan for how your children will be looked after if their school or daycare closes. Talk with loved ones about how they would be cared for if they get sick. Keep prescriptions filled and have medicines like pain relievers, cough and cold medicines, and stomach remedies on hand.

Stay informed about the flu season. For local updates, visit the public health department's website at www.muskegonhealth.net. If you have questions about the flu, call 2-1-1. If using a cell or pay phone call 231-733-1155 or toll free 877-211-5253.



**Keep 'em
home!**

www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu »

