



5 Things You Can Do to Help Prevent the Spread of the H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

Department of Health & Human Services

This fall we're not only facing the regular seasonal flu, but also the H1N1 virus, a potentially more dangerous strain. The Department of Health and Human Services is working together with the Departments of Homeland Security and Education to monitor the spread of the H1N1 virus and to prepare a voluntary fall vaccination program. But the most critical steps to mitigating the effects of H1N1 will take place in your homes, schools, and workplace.

Taking precautions for this fall's flu season is a responsibility we all share. Here are 5 basic steps to keep you and your family healthy and keep flu from spreading in your community.

Visit www.Flu.gov to learn more.

1. Make prevention the first line of defense.

Everyone needs to make it a routine to wash their hands often with soap and water. Remind your family to cough or sneeze into their sleeves or into a tissue, not in their hands. These steps are easy, but they only work if every member of the family participates.

2. Make sure you and your entire family get vaccinated.

Vaccines are the best means we have to make sure that families and communities are protected from flu. Vaccines for both H1N1 and seasonal flu will be available this fall. Scientists at the National Institutes of Health, the CDC, and the Food and Drug Administration are working around the clock with vaccine manufacturers to make sure that flu vaccines are safe and effective.

3. Stay home if they're sick.

If you're sick, stay home. H1N1 spreads rapidly, particularly among kids and young adults; it's especially risky if you're pregnant. Look for these symptoms: Similar to seasonal flu, with H1N1 you'll get a fever, cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, achiness, headache, chills and fatigue. Sometimes H1N1 causes diarrhea and vomiting. Both H1N1 and seasonal flu can be severe and occasionally deadly.

4. Start planning now.

Ask yourself these questions: If you work and your child becomes sick, have you made arrangements for child care? Have you talked with your employer about what to do in case you need to be out?

5. Go to flu.gov for the latest information on H1N1 and seasonal flu.

Flu.gov is a one-stop government wide resource with planning tools to get a jump-start on the 2009 flu season.