

**NATIONAL  
BLACK  
CHURCH  
INITIATIVE**

# National Black Church Initiative Health Note

## **H1N1 FLU (SWINE FLU) and YOU**

*How to prevent it and stay healthy*

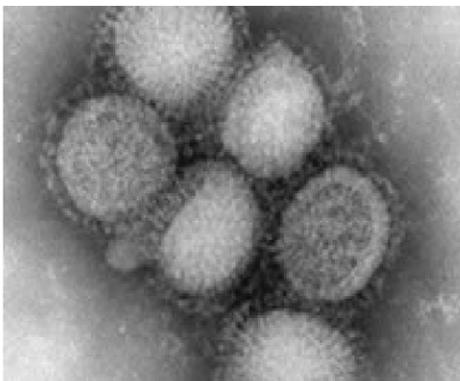


World Health  
Organization

**WHO** raises its pandemic  
alert level 5 on H1N1 flu

## **What is this new H1N1 virus**

*This virus was originally referred to as “swine flu” because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs in North America. But further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia and avian genes and human genes. Scientists call this a “quadruple reassortant” virus.*



**Call 1-800-CDC-INFO • (1-800- 232-4636)**

## How to prevent the flu and stay healthy

Is it  
contagious

Yes.

The CDC has determined that this H1N1 influenza A virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it is not known how easily the virus spreads between people.

### How H1N1 flu is spread

The main way that influenza viruses are thought to spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

### People with swine flu who are cared for at home should:

- Check with their health care provider about any special care they might need if they are pregnant or have a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema
- Check with their health care provider about whether they should take antiviral medications
- Stay home for 7 days after the start of illness and fever is gone
- Get plenty of rest
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after using tissues and after coughing or sneezing into hands
- Avoid close contact with others do not go to work or school while ill
- Be watchful for emergency warning signs that might indicate you need to seek medical attention

### How to avoid the flu



#### *First and most important: wash your hands.*

Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Try not to touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get **vaccinated** each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are **flu antiviral drugs** that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.

#### *Avoid close contact.*

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

#### *Stay home when you are sick.*

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

#### *Cover your mouth and nose.*

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

#### *Clean your hands.*

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

#### *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.*

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

## How to prevent the flu and stay healthy

### What are the symptoms

The symptoms of H1N1 flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with H1N1 flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

### Steps to take if you have the symptoms

Antiviral medications can sometimes help lessen influenza symptoms, but require a prescription. Most people do not need these antiviral drugs to fully recover from the flu. However, persons at higher risk for severe flu complications, or those with severe flu illness who require hospitalization, might benefit from antiviral medications. Antiviral medications are available for persons 1 year of age and older. Ask your healthcare provider whether you need antiviral medication.

Influenza infections can lead to or occur with bacterial infections. Therefore, some people will also need to take antibiotics. More severe or prolonged illness or illness that seems to get better, but then gets worse again may be an indication that a person has a bacterial infection. Check with your healthcare provider if you have concerns.

### Warning!

Do **not** give aspirin (*acetylsalicylic acid*) to children or teenagers who have the flu; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome. For more information about Reye's syndrome, visit the National Institute of Health website at

[http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/reyes\\_syndrome/reyes\\_syndrome.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/reyes_syndrome/reyes_syndrome.htm)

- Check ingredient labels on over-the-counter cold and flu medications to see if they contain aspirin.

- Teenagers with the flu can take medicines **without aspirin**, such as **acetaminophen (Tylenol®)** and **ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®)**, to relieve symptoms.
- Children younger than 2 years of age should not be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a healthcare provider.
- The safest care for flu symptoms in children younger than 2 years of age is using a cool-mist humidifier and a suction bulb to help clear away mucus.
- Fevers and aches can be treated with **acetaminophen (Tylenol®)** or **ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®)** or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Examples of these kinds of medications include:

Generic Name	Brand Name(s)
Acetaminophen	<b>TYLENOL</b>
Ibuprofen	<b>Advil</b> <b>Motrin</b> <b>NUPRIN</b>
Naproxen	<b>ALEVE</b>

**When providing care to a household member who is sick with influenza, the most important ways to protect yourself and others who are not sick are to:**

- keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible (see "placement of the sick person at home")
- remind the sick person to cover their coughs, and clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after coughing and/or sneezing.
- have everyone in the household clean their hands often, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- ask your healthcare provider if household contacts of the sick person-particularly those contacts who may have chronic health conditions-should take antiviral medications such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (Relenza®) to prevent the flu.

# How to prevent the flu and stay healthy

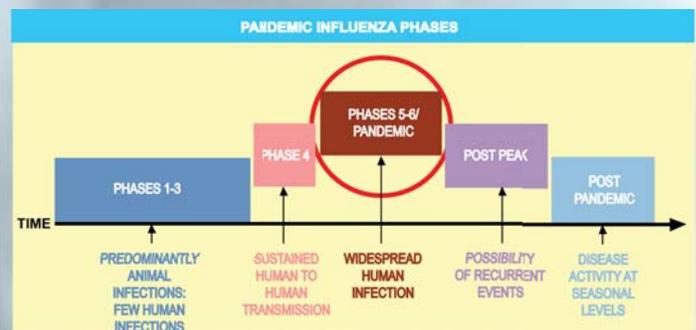
## Placement of the sick person

- Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house. (For example, a spare bedroom with its own bathroom, if that's possible.) Keep the sickroom door closed.
- Unless necessary for medical care, persons with the flu should not leave the home when they have a fever or during the time that they are most likely to spread their infection to others (7 days after onset of symptoms in adults. Children may pass the virus for longer than 7 days).
- If persons with the flu need to leave the home (for example, for medical care), they should cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and wear a loose-fitting (surgical) mask if available.
- Have the sick person wear a surgical mask if they need to be in a common area of the house near other persons.
- If possible, sick persons should use a separate bathroom. This bathroom should be cleaned daily with household disinfectant.

## Protect other persons in the home

- The sick person should not have visitors other than caregivers. A phone call is safer than a visit.
- If possible, have only one adult in the home take care of the sick person.
- Avoid having pregnant women care for the sick person. (Pregnant women are at increased risk of influenza-related complications and immunity can be suppressed during pregnancy).
- All persons in the household should clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub frequently, including after every contact with the sick person or the person's room or bathroom.

- Use paper towels for drying hands after hand washing or dedicate cloth towels to each person in the household. For example, have different colored towels for each person.
- If possible, consideration should be given to maintaining good ventilation in shared household areas (e.g., keeping windows open in restrooms, kitchen, bathroom, etc.).
- Antivirals can be used to prevent the flu, so check with your healthcare provider to see if some persons in the home should use antiviral medications.



## If you are the caregiver

- Avoid being face-to-face with the sick person.
- When holding small children who are sick, place their chin on your shoulder so that they will not cough in your face.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after you touch the sick person or handle used tissues, or laundry.
- Caregivers might catch flu from the person they are caring for and then the caregiver might be able to spread the flu to others before the caregiver shows symptoms. Therefore, the caregiver should wear a mask when they leave their home to keep from spreading flu to others in case they are in the early stages of infection.
- Talk to your health care provider about taking antiviral medication to prevent the caregiver from getting the flu.
- Monitor yourself and household members for flu symptoms and contact a telephone hotline or health care provider if symptoms occur.

## How to prevent the flu and stay healthy

### Using Facemasks or Respirators



- Avoid close contact (less than about 6 feet away) with the sick person as much as possible.
- If you must have close contact with the sick person (for example, hold a sick infant), spend the least amount of time possible in close contact and try to wear a facemask (for example, surgical mask) or N95 disposable respirator.
- An N95 respirator that fits snugly on your face can filter out small particles that can be inhaled around the edges of a facemask, but compared with a facemask it is harder to breathe through an N95 mask for long periods of time. More information on facemasks and respirators can be found at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu)
- Facemasks and respirators may be purchased at a pharmacy, building supply or hardware store.
- Wear an N95 respirator if you help a sick person with respiratory treatments using a nebulizer or inhaler, as directed by their doctor. Respiratory treatments should be performed in a separate room away from common areas of the house when at all possible.
- Used facemasks and N95 respirators should be taken off and placed immediately in the regular trash so they don't touch anything else.

- Avoid reusing disposable facemasks and N95 respirators if possible. If a reusable fabric facemask is used, it should be laundered with normal laundry detergent and tumble-dried in a hot dryer.
- After you take off a facemask or N95 respirator, clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

### Household Cleaning, Laundry, and Waste Disposal

- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.
- Wash linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using household laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting. Avoid "hugging" laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating yourself. Clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub right after handling dirty laundry.
- Eating utensils should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with water and soap.

## *How to prevent the flu and stay healthy*

### WHAT IS SOCIAL DISTANCING?

#### *How it help stop the spread of the flu.*

Limiting close face-to-face contacts with other people is an important protective behavior to limit the risks of exposures from droplet, aerosol, or contact transmission in the event of a flu outbreak. Simply put, social distancing is a way of keeping our distance from each other to lessen the spread of flu to help slow the spread of disease and is an important tool in an influenza outbreak.

#### *7 steps you can do to lessen the spread of Flu.*

##### *Practice social distancing:*

- 1** Consider limiting the frequency of face-to-face contacts
- 2** Consider limiting casual (social) interactions that may normally occur at work and throughout the day
- 3** Do not report to work if you are sick
- 4** Take staggered break times at work
- 5** Establish flexible work hours or an alternative
- 6** Consider using e-mail, text messaging and personal mobile phones to communicate instead of face-to-face contact
- 7** Think about the necessity of conferences and group gatherings during an influenza outbreak



### HOW CHURCHES SHOULD PREPARE FOR THE FLU OUTBREAK

- **CONSULT WITH LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS**
- **DEVELOP AND PLAN**
- **FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE HEALTH AUTHORITY**
- **AGREE TO SERVE ON LOCAL BOARD AND HELP REASSURE PEOPLE AND WORK CLOSELY WITH EMERGENCY WORKERS**
- **SCHEDULE PRACTICE DRILLS OF THE PLAN**
- **STOCK PROTECTION MASKS FOR THE CONGREGATION**

## For More Information



The Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention (CDC)  
**Hotline 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)**

***<http://www.cdc.gov/>***

is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
*Phone numbers for local health authorities*

### **District of Columbia**

**Call 311**

***<http://dchealth.dc.gov/doh/site/default.asp>***

### **State of Maryland**

**1-877-MDFLU4U (633-5848)**

***<http://www.governor.maryland.gov/flu/index.html>***

### **Prince George County**

**301-583-3750**

***<http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/flu/index.html>***

### **Commonwealth of Virginia**

**1-877-ASK-VDH3 or 1-877-275-8343**

***<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>***

### **State of Pennsylvania**

**1-877-724-3258**

***<http://www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health/cwp/view.asp?q=252990>***

## ***How to prevent the flu and stay healthy***

### **State of New York**

Call Department's hotline at **1-800-808-1987**

New York City residents should **call 311**

***<http://www.nyhealth.gov/>***

### **State of New Jersey**

**866-321-9571**

***<http://www.nj.gov/health/er/h1n1/>***

### ***Major Websites***

World Health Organization



Avenue Appia 20  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland

**Telephone: + 41 22 791 21 11**

**Facsimile (fax): + 41 22 791 31 11**

***<http://www.who.int/en/>***

Pan American Health Organization



Regional Office of the World Health Organization  
525 Twenty-third Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, United States of America

***<http://new.paho.org/hq/>***

**Country/City Code: (202) Tel: 974-3000 Fax: 974-3663**