



FACTS

about H1N1 (swine) Flu

for Asthmatics

**Don't Get the Flu.
Don't Spread the Flu.**

H1N1 (swine) flu is a new strain of influenza that is spread from person-to-person through close contact with sick individuals or from contaminated surfaces (doorknobs, handrails, phones, etc). Because of their respiratory illness, asthmatics are at greater risk of severe illness from seasonal and H1N1 influenza. Remember, this information can change as we learn more.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM H1N1 INFECTION

- **Get vaccinated.** There is a seasonal flu and an H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine. Get both. Asthmatics are approved to receive the flu shot only, not the FluMist nasal spray.
- **Develop an Asthma Action Plan with your doctor.** (<http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/actionplan>). Make sure that an updated copy of this plan is at your child's school or daycare center along with a necessary medication. At home, the plan and medication should be easy to get if needed.
- **Wash your hands.** Use soap and water for more than 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- **Avoid contact with those who are sick.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**
- **Cover your cough.** Use a tissue (which you throw away), your sleeve or elbow, then wash your hands.
- **Stay home if you feel sick.** Do not return to work or school until you are fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- **Develop a family emergency plan.** Know where your children can stay if you are sick or if their school is closed and you must continue to work.
- **Consult your doctor if you get sick.** Treatment with antivirals within 48 hours should be considered for asthmatics with suspected or confirmed influenza or who have been exposed to someone that has flu-like sickness. If you exhibit any of the warning signs (listed below), seek care immediately.

SYMPTOMS OF H1N1 (SWINE) FLU ARE FEVER (>100 DEGREES F) AND COUGH AND/OR SORE THROAT, BUT CAN ALSO INCLUDE:

✓ Body aches ✓ Chills ✓ Headache ✓ Runny nose ✓ Vomiting ✓ Diarrhea

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY OR SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF YOU EXPERIENCE THESE WARNING SIGNS:

CHILDREN

- ✓ Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- ✓ Bluish or gray skin color
- ✓ Not drinking enough fluids
- ✓ Severe or persistent vomiting
- ✓ Not waking up or not interacting
- ✓ Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- ✓ Symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

ADULTS

- ✓ Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- ✓ Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- ✓ Sudden dizziness
- ✓ Confusion
- ✓ Severe or persistent vomiting
- ✓ Symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

For more detailed information on H1N1, flu vaccination, or how to protect yourself or your family:

- Visit the Baltimore City Health Department website (<http://www.baltimorehealth.org>)
- Call the Baltimore City 3-1-1 call center or Maryland flu hotline 1-800-MDFLU4U
- Visit <http://www.flu.gov/> or the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (<http://dnhm.maryland.gov/swineflu>)

