



# FACTS

## about H1N1 (swine) Flu

### for the **Elderly**

**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). While young people appear at greatest risk to catch this particular H1N1 flu, adults over 65 years of age are still at risk for complications if they get sick. Also, seniors tend to experience the most complications from seasonal flu. This information is the most current, but can also change.

### PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM H1N1 INFECTION

- **Get vaccinated.** There is a seasonal flu and an H1N1 (swine) flu vaccine. Get both.
- **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 (or grandchildren) 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.** Most cases of H1N1 influenza do not require treatment, but consult your physician if you become sick. Because seasonal flu can be dangerous for seniors, your doctor should evaluate whether you need to come in for a visit. However, if you exhibit any of the warning signs (listed below), seek care immediately.
- **Continue taking your medications.** Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, continue to take your prescribed medications. Try to maintain at least a two week supply.

### 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://dhmh.maryland.gov/swineflu>)

