

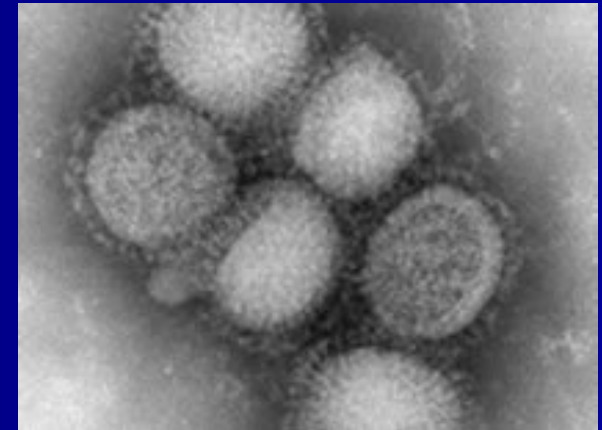
H1N1 Influenza

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October, 2009

What is H1N1 (swine flu)?

- A New Influenza virus
- First detected in the US in April 2009
- Found in other countries around the world (Pandemic)
- Not previously seen in humans
- The dominant flu virus



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Why is this virus called “swine flu”?

- This virus was originally referred to as “swine flu” because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs.
- It is not associated with pig contact.



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Are there human infections with H1N1 virus?

- Cases of human infection with H1N1 influenza virus were first confirmed in Mexico and the U.S.
- The virus has spread since that time with more and more cases around the world.
- Vermont now has sporadic cases of H1N1, while most States have widespread cases.



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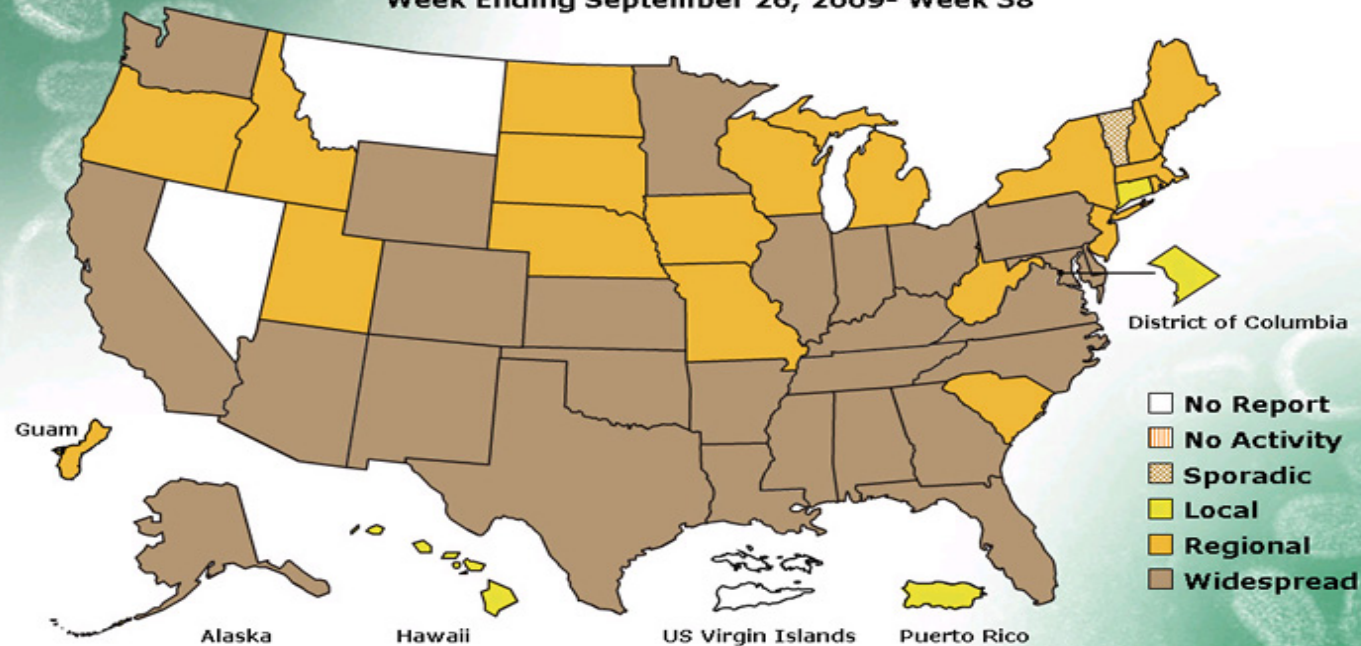
CDC Reports Flu Activity Each Week

FLUVIEW



A Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report Prepared by the Influenza Division
Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State and Territorial Epidemiologists*

Week Ending September 26, 2009- Week 38



*This map indicates geographic spread and does not measure the severity of influenza activity.

How is H1N1 Virus Spread?

- H1N1 is contagious and is spread from human to human.
 - By contact with infectious secretions
 - By droplets expelled in the air when a sick person coughs or sneezes
 - Perhaps airborne with droplets small enough to circulate in the air

What are the signs and symptoms of infection?

- Symptoms are similar to symptoms of seasonal flu and include:
 - Fever (100 degrees F or greater)
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Body aches
 - Fatigue
 - Vomiting or diarrhea



How severe is H1N1 illness?

- The majority of patients have mild illness
- Some patients have moderate illness (SOB, wheezing, dehydration)
- Some people may have severe illness requiring emergency care and hospitalization



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How long can an infected person spread the virus?

- It is thought that people may be contagious from one day before they develop symptoms and for seven days after they get sick
- Children might be contagious longer



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What can I do to protect myself from H1N1

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
 - Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it
 - Wash your hands often, or use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick
 - For 1 day after your fever goes away



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What else can I do?

- Follow CDC guidelines and advice about school closures, avoiding crowds or other measures if asked.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home
 - OTC medicines, hand sanitizer, tissues, food, supplies, etc.



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What if I do get sick?

- For Mild illness with no risk factors
 - Stay at Home, Treat your Symptoms
- For Mild Illness with risk factors
 - Talk to your physician
- For Moderate or Severe illness (SOB, wheezing, dehydration)
 - Seek medical care



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Warning signs in 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
- Flu like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough



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Warning signs in Adults

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



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Are there medicines to treat infection?

- Yes. Antiviral medications can be used to treat the flu
- Antiviral drugs can make you feel better a day or two sooner if taken early
- They may also prevent serious flu complications



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How long can influenza virus remain on objects such as doorknobs?

- Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for up to eight hours after being contaminated.



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What kills influenza virus in the environment?

- Influenza virus is destroyed by heat.
- Also, most chemical germicides are effective
 - Alcohol
 - Chlorine
 - Hospital disinfectants
 - Most household cleaners



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What about household cleaning?

- It is important to keep surfaces clean by wiping them down with a disinfectant when handled or in contact with someone who is sick.
 - Bedside tables, bathroom, kitchen counters and toys



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How should linens and dishes be handled?

- Linens, eating utensils and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but these items should not be shared without washing them first.
- For linens use laundry soap and dry at a hot setting
 - Avoid handling dirty linen
- Eating utensils should be washed by hand with water and soap or in a dishwasher



What about healthcare workers?

- Healthcare workers are following the recommendations of the CDC
- If you see a physician or visit a hospital you may notice these differences
- Visitors may be limited in hospitals



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What happens at the hospital?

- Patients with flu-like illness are asked to wear a mask to protect other patients and healthcare workers
- When performing an evaluation or testing patients for flu, healthcare workers have been advised to wear a special mask to prevent infection



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In the Hospital

- Until more is known about H1N1, hospitals have been advised by CDC to use extra precautions for patients admitted with severe influenza.
- Special Precautions are being used:
 - Private Room
 - Healthcare workers wear gloves, gowns, masks and goggles when taking care of sick patients



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Who's at Risk for H1N1?

- CDC studies on H1N1 have shown
 - Highest infection rates in persons 5-24 years
 - Lowest infection rates in persons > 65 years
 - Highest Hospitalization rates in children less than 4 years of age
 - Outbreaks in areas where youth get together (schools, colleges, camps)
- This is much different than traditional flu

Is there a Vaccine for H1N1?

- Vaccines are available for H1N1
- Persons at high risk for illness will be immunized first
 - Pregnant women
 - People who live with or care for infants less than six months old
 - Health Care and Emergency Medical Services Workers
 - Persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years
 - People between the ages of 25 and 64 years who have medical conditions
- Immunization will then be offered to
 - All persons between the ages of 25 and 64 years
 - People over 65 years of age

Updates

- At Rutland Regional Medical Center we care about your health. We're reviewing the recommendations from CDC daily and making sure we provide the best and most up to date care for our patients.
- If you would like more information, please visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov and click on H1N1 flu