

# 2009 H1N1 Flu

## Information for Veterans and VA Staff

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)

May 8, 2009

### What is H1N1 Flu?

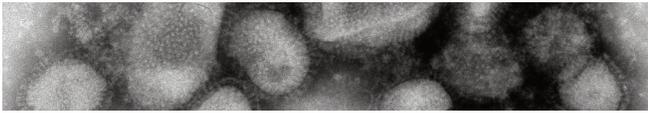


Photo credit: CDC

H1N1 flu (formerly known as swine flu), caused by a subtype of flu virus, is a contagious respiratory illness. There are three types of flu viruses: A, B and C. One subtype of flu A virus is H1N1. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that this H1N1 flu is contagious and is spreading from human to human.

### How does H1N1 Flu spread?

Spread of the H1N1 flu is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with flu. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Keep yourself in good general health – get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with flu, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Keep informed about H1N1 flu in your community and workplace – note school or work place closings or restrictions in social gatherings.

SafeGuarding and Serving

VETERANS AND VA FIGHT THE  
2009 H1N1 FLU

Department of Veterans Affairs  
[www.publichealth.va.gov](http://www.publichealth.va.gov)

 Department of  
Veterans Affairs

## How can someone with the flu infect someone else?

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

## What are the signs and symptoms in people?

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.

A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.

## DID YOU KNOW

...you **CANNOT** get H1N1 flu from eating pork.

...your seasonal flu vaccination does **NOT** protect you from H1N1 flu. However, getting vaccinated each year is still your best protection from seasonal flu.

...currently, there is **NO** vaccine that will protect humans from 2009 H1N1 flu. The U.S. is working on a vaccine, but it would not be available for four to six months at the earliest.

...the actions you take can help slow the spread of flu and reduce its impact.



The main Federal web site for information is [www.cdc.gov/H1N1](http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1)

The main VA Internet site is [www.publichealth.va.gov](http://www.publichealth.va.gov)  
and, for VA staff only, [vaww.vhaco.va.gov/pubhealth/H1N1Flu/index.htm](http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/pubhealth/H1N1Flu/index.htm)

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