

# Symptoms of H1N1 (Swine Flu)

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Hi. I'm Dr. Joe Bresee with the CDC's Influenza Division. I'm here to speak with you today about the symptoms of swine flu infections and what to do if you get sick. Since March 2009, persons with infection caused by a new strain of swine flu virus have been identified in the U.S. and other countries. It's important that people recognize the symptoms of swine flu and seek medical care if necessary.

For many years, we've known that swine flu occasionally infects humans, so we know the typical symptoms of swine flu. The symptoms are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, or fatigue. Some people with swine flu have also reported diarrhea or vomiting. In the past, severe illness, such as pneumonia or respiratory failure, as well as death has been reported with swine flu infections in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

If you live in an area where swine flu infections have been reported, and if you become ill with flu-like symptoms you may want to contact your health care provider, particularly if you're worried about your symptoms. Your health care provider will determine whether swine flu testing or treatment is needed.

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, get emergency medical care. In children, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include: fast breathing or trouble breathing, bluish skin color, not drinking enough fluids, not waking up or not interacting, being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, fever with a rash, or flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever or worse cough. In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, or severe or persistent vomiting.

People with swine flu can infect others and could be contagious as long as they are symptomatic, and possibly for up to seven days following the onset of illness. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

Fortunately, there are medicines that can be used to treat swine flu. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines, such as pills, liquids, or an inhaler that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and can make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within two days of symptoms. CDC recommends the use of oseltamivir, which is also called Tamiflu®, or zanamivir, which is also called Relenza®, for the treatment or prevention of infection with these swine flu viruses.

If you get sick with swine flu, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to reduce the chance of transmitting the infection. Avoid touching your

eyes, nose, or mouth because germs can spread that way. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

For more information about swine flu, visit [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).

*For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.*