



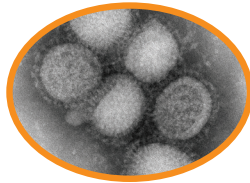
# Pandemic H1N1 flu

[www.flu.oregon.gov](http://www.flu.oregon.gov)

## Flu facts

### Introduction

- Pandemic H1N1 (originally referred to as “swine” flu) is a respiratory disease caused by type A H1N1 influenza virus.
- Human cases of pandemic H1N1 influenza started showing up in the U.S. in late March 2009, and quickly spread throughout the country and the world. In June 2009, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic of the new virus.



### Risks

- Infections with pandemic H1N1 flu can be mild to severe. Most cases in the U.S. have been similar to seasonal flu.
- Certain groups are at increased risk of complications from pandemic H1N1. These include pregnant women, infants, children and young adults up to 24 years of age; and those with chronic health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, or compromised immunity.
- People in these groups who develop a high fever with cough, sore throat, or muscle aches—or parents of young children with these symptoms, should call their health care provider.
- Like other influenza illness, pandemic H1N1 flu spreads from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people who are sick.
- You cannot get pandemic H1N1 flu from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

### Symptoms

- The symptoms of pandemic H1N1 are similar to the symptoms of regular flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also experienced diarrhea and vomiting.
- Like seasonal flu, pandemic H1N1 may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions. Most deaths have been in people with underlying medical conditions.
- Seek emergency medical care if you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs:
  - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
  - Sudden dizziness
  - Confusion
  - Severe or persistent vomiting.
- 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
  - Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough
  - Fever with a rash.



## Treatment

- Most people with pandemic H1N1 get better with bed rest, good nutrition, and use of over-the-counter medications to relieve symptoms.
- In specific circumstances, antiviral medications may be helpful in reducing symptoms or preventing the spread of disease. Currently, this would only be for hospitalized patients, individuals with chronic health conditions who are at high risk of complications, or close contacts of those at high risk.
- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in the body.
- If treatment is started within two days of the onset of symptoms, antiviral drugs can help prevent serious flu complications, may make illness milder and help patients feel better faster.



## Prevention

- Vaccine to protect against pandemic H1N1 is expected to be ready soon.
- Regular flu vaccines do not generally protect against pandemic H1N1 flu. However, seasonal influenza is a serious illness that kills approximately 36,000 people in the U.S. each year. It is important to get vaccinated against the flu every year.



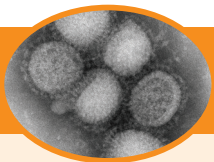
- There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Always stay home from work or school when you're sick, and limit contact with others to keep them from getting sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.



## Smoking and the flu

- People who smoke get the flu more easily and get sicker. People who breathe secondhand smoke, especially children and older people, get the flu more easily and get sicker.
- Quit smoking now. Call the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for free coaching and advice on quitting. The call is free and confidential. Patches or medicines to help you quit may be available. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW today or go to [www.quitnow.net/oregon](http://www.quitnow.net/oregon).



# For more information

**Oregon Public Health Division**  
[www.flu.oregon.gov](http://www.flu.oregon.gov)

**Oregon Public Health Hotline**  
**1-800-978-3040**

**Oregon county health departments**  
[www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/lhd/lhd.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/lhd/lhd.shtml)



**Federal pandemic H1N1 flu information**  
[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

**World Health Organization**  
[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

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