



**Seasonal Flu & Pandemic H1N1 Flu**  
**Information for Childcare and Preschools: Fall 2009**  
**Updated: September 14, 2009**

**What is the H1N1 flu?**

In April 2009, a new flu virus called H1N1 influenza (early on called “swine flu”) started making people ill. The H1N1 flu spread from person-to-person, much the same way that regular seasonal flu viruses spread. Now the new flu virus is called **pandemic H1N1**.

**What are the symptoms of the H1N1 flu?**

Symptoms of seasonal flu and pandemic H1N1 flu are similar and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people with the pandemic H1N1 flu, especially children, may also have diarrhea and vomiting. The severity of symptoms may vary. Some people may have mild symptoms and no fever, others may have fever and cough, and others may be sick enough to require hospital care.

**What should I do?**

1. **Get a seasonal flu vaccine for your child and yourself.** Children ages 6 months to 18 years should get a flu vaccine every year. If you live with a child who is under 6 months of age, it is especially important to get a seasonal flu vaccine for yourself and everyone else in the household.
2. **Get the H1N1 vaccine for your child and at-risk household members.** A vaccine for the pandemic H1N1 flu will be available later in the fall. Initially, there will be a limited supply, but vaccine will be given to at-risk groups first, which include children and young adults age 6 months to 24 years, as well as household contacts and caregivers of infants less than 6 months of age. The H1N1 vaccine will most likely require a booster shot 2 to 3 weeks after the first shot. Go to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm> for more information.
3. **Stay home when sick.** Children and caregivers with flu-like symptoms including a temperature of 100 °F [37.8° C] or higher should stay home and away from others **until at least 24 hours after they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medicine.**
4. **Conduct daily health checks.** Before you bring your child to preschool or childcare, look for any signs of illness or behavior change that may suggest illness. Keep your child home and away from others if you think they may be getting sick.
5. **Teach your child good health habits.** Show them how to cover their cough and sneeze into their sleeve, or to cover their cough/sneeze with tissues. They should wash their hands often and keep their hands away from their faces. Even young children can begin to learn these healthy habits. These simple tips will go a long way in limiting the spread of disease.

**Revised**

Not everyone with flu symptoms needs to be seen by a health care provider or be tested for influenza. The best thing to do is to stay at home and rest. But if you are worried that you or your child’s symptoms are getting worse, be sure to contact your health care provider. As we learn more about the pandemic H1N1 flu, information may change. Be sure to watch for other notices from your child’s school or child care, or go to the Public Health Department web site for updates at [www.sccphd.org](http://www.sccphd.org). If you have additional questions, you may call the Public Health Information Line at 408-885-3980.

Thank you for helping us keep our community as healthy as possible.