

For More Information

To help keep communities healthy during the upcoming flu season, it will take many community nonprofits, faith-based organizations, local government, businesses, hospitals and schools working together. For a host of materials and downloadable information to use in your community, please [visit www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).



You'll also find valuable information at www.inova.org/flu

Edited by Genea Luck, MA, Program Manager, Congregational Health Partnership.

Articles in this newsletter are not a substitute for the care and advice of medical professionals. When you have a question or need medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, consult your physician.

This newsletter is produced by Inova Health System in conjunction with your faith community. If you prefer not to receive this newsletter, please notify the appropriate personnel in your faith community.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit healthcare system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services, including emergency- and urgent-care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health and blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. Inova provides a healthy environment for its patients, families, visitors, staff and physicians by prohibiting tobacco use on its campuses.



Congregational Health Partnership
2700 Prosperity Ave, Suite 100
Fairfax, VA 22031
Phone: 703-698-2558
Fax: 703-698-2579

www.inova.org/chp



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For Your Health

What is H1N1?

This flu season is expected to have a large increase in both seasonal flu and H1N1 ("swine flu") flu-related illnesses.

H1N1 is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected among people in the United States in April 2009.

This virus spreads easily person to person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread (though droplets distributed in the air and on surfaces when people sneeze or cough). On June 11, the World Health Organization signaled that a pandemic of 2009 H1N1 flu was underway, meaning that the disease existed around the world and was spreading between people easily.

This virus was originally referred to as "swine flu" because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs (swine) in North America.

However, further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia, as well as bird (avian) genes and human genes. Scientists call this a "quadruple reassortant" virus.

Know the Symptoms!

The symptoms of the 2009 H1N1 flu virus in people include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu (including H1N1) and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Severe illnesses and deaths have occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

Most people recover from flu after a week or so, but there are “Emergency Warning Signs” you should watch out for:

In children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or 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

In adults:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

If you or a loved one experience these emergency warning signs, you should go to the emergency room! If you get sick with flu symptoms and are at risk of flu complications because you have other health problems, are pregnant, or are caring for small children, call your healthcare provider for advice.

Who Is at Risk?

In seasonal flu, certain people are at “high risk” of serious complications. This includes people 65 years and older, children younger than five years old, pregnant women and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions.

About 70 percent of people who have been hospitalized with the 2009 H1N1 virus have had one or more medical conditions previously recognized as placing people at “high risk” of serious seasonal flu-related complications. This includes pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.

Work to Stay Healthy

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing.
- 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 with soap and warm water. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- The [Center for Disease Control](#) (CDC) recommends that you stay home from work or school, and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Find healthy ways to deal with stress and anxiety.
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.