

The most recent review of the CDC's website indicates that H1N1 flu is now considered "widespread" in California. A recent publication by the county of Los Angeles indicates that cases in Los Angeles County appear to be increasing, and accordingly the County of Los Angeles is anticipating increased hospitalizations, deaths and outbreaks in the next few weeks. At this writing there is no further update from Riverside County.

There is no indication that the severity of the disease is changing—it is still considered to be relatively mild for most people. However, as it is with all flu-like illnesses, there is increased a risk of complications for children, adults over age 65, people of any age with chronic medical conditions and those with compromised immune systems.

The symptoms of this new H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, (100 degrees F or higher) cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this new H1N1 virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. It is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care, but treatment is available for those who are seriously ill and include prescription antiviral drugs prescribed by a health care professional.

The CDC recommends:

- If you are experiencing the symptoms noted above, remember they may last a week or longer. If you are sick, you should stay home for 7 days or until your symptoms are gone for 24 hours, whichever is longer. (Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods).
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid contact with other persons, except to seek medical care. If you leave the house to seek medical care, wear a mask or cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

Stay informed. Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available. Visit the CDC H1N1 Flu website <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu> .

### **Emergency Warning Signs**

If you or a member of your family become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care.

In CHILDREN emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting

- 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

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
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

There is a possibility of a specific influenza vaccine for H1N1 being ready this fall, though we do not know for whom the vaccine will be available at this time. We are planning to have several seasonal flu immunization clinics in October open to students, employees and adult family members. We will post dates and times when set. As always, I urge everyone to consider being immunized yearly against influenza.

The staff of Health Service is available to answer questions, should you have them, and we wish you all continued good health!

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