



---

## CDC Says “Take 3” Steps To Fight The Flu

*These actions will protect against the new H1N1 too!*

---

*Flu is a serious contagious disease. Each year in the United States, on average, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and 36,000 people die from seasonal flu complications.*

*This flu season could be worse. There is a new and very different flu virus spreading worldwide among people called novel or new H1N1 flu. This virus may cause more illness or more severe illness than usual.*

*The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from influenza (the flu):*

### 1.) Take time to get vaccinated.

- CDC recommends a yearly seasonal flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal influenza.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the seasonal flu vaccine protects against the three seasonal viruses that research suggests will be most common.
- Vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications, including young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Seasonal flu vaccine is also important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to prevent giving the flu to those at high risk
- A seasonal vaccine will not protect you against novel H1N1.
- A new vaccine against novel H1N1 is being produced and will be available in the coming months as an option for prevention of novel H1N1 infection.
- People at greatest risk for novel H1N1 infection include children, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes or heart and lung disease.

### 2.) Take everyday preventive actions.

- 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 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.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible. This is to keep from making others sick.
- While sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Visit the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>) to find out what to do if you get sick with the flu and how to care for someone at home who is sick with the flu.

### 3.) Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.

- If you get seasonal or novel H1N1 flu, antiviral drugs can treat the flu.
- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.
- Antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- Antiviral drugs are not sold over-the-counter and are different from antibiotics.
- Antiviral drugs may be especially important for people who are very sick (hospitalized) or people who are sick with the flu and who are at increased risk of serious flu complications, such as pregnant women, young children and those with chronic health conditions.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose muscle aches, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.

*\*Though the scientific evidence is not as extensive as that on hand washing and alcohol-based sanitizers, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful for killing flu germs on hands in settings where alcohol-based products are prohibited.*

#### Brochure

- [Take 3](#) (PDF, 766.72 KB)

Page last updated August 5, 2009

Content Source: Coordinating Center for Infectious Diseases (CCID)

[National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#)

