

# PANDEMIC H1N1 INFLUENZA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**H1N1** | **PREPARE 4 FLU 2 DAY**  
[www.ColumbusPandemicFlu.org](http://www.ColumbusPandemicFlu.org)



## I heard someone in Columbus died from pandemic H1N1. Is that true?

Yes, the first Franklin County resident died on September 3, 2009, from complications of the H1N1 virus. Tragically, it was a 20-year-old pregnant woman. The woman's baby was delivered prior to her death. Officials report that the baby is doing well. This is the first Central Ohio death linked to H1N1.

## Does this mean that pandemic H1N1 has become more severe and others will die?

At this time the strain of H1N1 virus has not become more severe. There are groups of people that are at higher risk of contracting H1N1 and having complications from the illness, such as pregnant women. This sad event shows that our community is not safe from this worldwide pandemic, and we all need to prepare now to protect ourselves, our families and the entire community.

## Who is at highest risk?

Anyone can be affected by H1N1 so everyone should take steps to protect themselves. About 70 percent of people who have been hospitalized with this H1N1 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.

Older adults (over 64 years of age) do not yet appear to be at an increased risk for H1N1 infection. This is different than seasonal flu, which older adults are at an increased risk for infection.

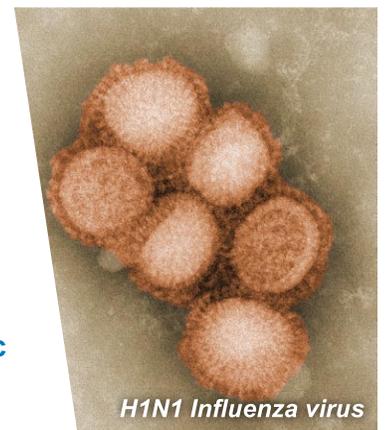
## What can I do to protect myself and my family?

There are simple and important actions that everyone can take to help protect themselves from both H1N1 and seasonal influenza:

- Get a seasonal flu shot – NOW!
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick until at least 24 hours after fever is gone.
- Cover your cough.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Get the pandemic H1N1 vaccine when it's available.

## Will a seasonal flu shot protect me from pandemic H1N1?

No, the seasonal flu shot will not protect you from pandemic H1N1. A separate H1N1 vaccine is being developed and is expected to be available to priority groups in mid to late October. It is still important to get your seasonal flu shot. It will protect you from the other flu strains that will be circulating soon.



H1N1 Influenza virus

9.22.09



### Who are in the priority groups for the pandemic H1N1 vaccine?

Current priority groups to receive the novel H1N1 vaccine are:

- Pregnant women
- Healthcare workers and emergency medical responders
- People caring for infants less than 6 months of age
- Children and young adults ages 6 months to 24 years
- People ages 25 to 64 years with underlying medical conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes)

### When and where can I get my seasonal flu shot?

Your Doctor's office most likely has the seasonal flu vaccine. You can also get it at most retail stores which have pharmacies. You can also visit <http://www.vaccine4me.com/> for a list of public clinics or call the Flu Hotline at 614-437-2900 or toll free (888) 202-1319.

### When and where can I get my pandemic H1N1 shot?

Details on when and where to get your H1N1 shot will be available in mid to late October once we know more about when we will receive the vaccine from the manufacturers.

### What are the signs and symptoms of pandemic H1N1 influenza in people?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu

and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people who have been infected with H1N1 have also reported diarrhea and vomiting.

### How does pandemic H1N1 influenza spread?

Spread of this H1N1 influenza virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

### How can someone with the flu infect someone else?

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health agencies recommend staying home from work, school or large gatherings if you feel sick.

### Where can I get more information?

Visit [www.ColumbusPandemicFlu.org](http://www.ColumbusPandemicFlu.org) or check Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Board of Health's joint social media pages:

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ColumbusFluInfo](http://www.facebook.com/ColumbusFluInfo)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/ColumbusFluInfo](http://www.twitter.com/ColumbusFluInfo)

Additional information also is available at:

- [www.odh.ohio.gov](http://www.odh.ohio.gov)
- [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)
- [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)