

KEY FACTS:

H1N1 INFLUENZA (Swine Flu)

WHAT IS INFLUENZA A H1N1 (Swine Flu)?

- H1N1 flu is a new strain of influenza. Studies have shown there is little immunity in the general population.
- H1N1 flu is circulating in the Thurston County community. We have had many confirmed cases reported.
- The Department continues to receive reports of cases of H1N1 flu and as is true with the rest of the country most cases are in individuals less than 50 years old.
- The primary symptoms are a fever of greater than 100°F, body aches, cough, and sore throat. Some individuals report breathing difficulties, diarrhea and vomiting.
- We expect cases of H1N1 flu to decrease over the summer but it will likely increase again in the fall.
- Most individuals experience mild to moderate illness and recover without medical treatment.
- Some individuals are hospitalized with critical illness due to H1N1 flu. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu and complications from it can cause death.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT ILLNESS?

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap - if soap and water are not available clean your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes and mouth.
- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Avoid large crowds.
- Do not share snacks, food, drinks, or cigarettes with others.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU BECOME ILL?

- Stay home from work, childcare, school or public gatherings when sick with a fever and cough.
- If you are diagnosed with H1N1 flu stay home for at least seven (7) days following the onset of illness. If you are still sick after 7 days, remain home for at least 24 hours after fever is gone.
- Drink a lot of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Cough into your sleeve or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze. Dispose of tissues in a covered container and wash your hands.
- Most individuals with influenza do not need to see a doctor. Call your health care provider if you or a family member are sick enough to need medical care.
- Family members who are sick with the flu, should avoid taking care of infants and other people at high risk for complications (i.e. immune-compromised) from influenza.

PREPARE YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FOR THE FLU SEASON

Get a seasonal flu shot when they are available. If you do not normally get a flu shot, please consider getting one this year. We have been advised that a vaccine for H1N1 may be available this fall. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has set guidance recommending who should receive the vaccine.

Think about what you may need at home while you or family members are sick with the flu:

- Tissues AND remember to properly dispose of used tissues in a covered container
- Soap and alcohol based hand sanitizers
- Thermometer
- Fever relievers like acetaminophen, ibuprofen - do not use aspirin
- Extra supply of prescription drugs and medical supplies
- Water or fluids with electrolytes (like sports drinks)
- Cleaning supplies, sanitizing cloths and bleach

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.cdc.gov/flu/

www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/

Thurston County Public Information line 360-709-3080



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