WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM CATCHING INFLUENZA A (H1N1)?

The main route of transmission of the new influenza A (H1N1) virus seems to be similar to seasonal influenza, via droplets that are expelled by speaking, sneezing or coughing. You can prevent getting infected by avoiding close contact with people who show influenza-like symptoms (trying to maintain a distance of about 1 meter possible) and taking the following measures:

- Avoid touching your mouth and nose;
- Clean hands thoroughly with soap and water, or clean them with an alcohol-based hand rub on a regular basis (especially if touching the mouth and nose, or surfaces that are potentially contaminated);
- Avoid close contact with people who might be ill;
- Reduce the time spent in crowded settings if possible;
- Improve airflow in your living space by opening windows;
- Practice good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping physically active.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE INFLUENZA A (H1N1)?

You will not be able to tell the difference between seasonal flu and influenza A (H1N1) without medical help. Typical symptoms include fever, headaches, body aches, sore throat and runny nose. Only a doctor (or nurse) and local health facility can confirm a case of influenza A (H1N1).

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE THE ILLNESS?

If you feel unwell, have high fever, cough or sore throat:
- Stay at home and keep away from work, school or crowds;
- Rest and take plenty of fluids;
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing and, if using tissues, make sure you dispose of them carefully. Clean your hands immediately after with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based hand rub;
- Avoid close contact with others;
- Inform family and friends about your illness and try to avoid contact with other people;
- If possible, contact a health professional before traveling to a health facility to discuss whether a medical examination is necessary.

SHOULD I TAKE AN ANTIVIRAL NOW JUST IN CASE I CATCH THE NEW VIRUS?

No. You should only take an antiviral, such as oseltamivir or zanamivir, if your health care provider advises you to do so. Individuals should not buy medicines to prevent or fight this new influenza without a prescription, and they should exercise caution in buying antiviral over the Internet.

WHAT ABOUT BREASTFEEDING? SHOULD I STOP IF I AM ILL?

No, unless your health care provider advises you to do so. Studies on other influenza infections show that breastfeeding does not affect maternal immunity and lowers the risk of respiratory disease. Breastfeeding provides the best overall nutrition for babies and increases their defense factors to fight illness.

WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE SEEK MEDICAL CARE?

A person should seek medical care if they experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or if a fever continues for more than three days. For parents, this is a sign that a child who is ill, seek medical care if a child has fast or labored breathing, continuing fever or convulsions (seizures).

Supportive care at home - resting, drinking plenty of fluids and using a humidifier is recommended. Influenza A (H1N1) is a pandemic for recovery in most cases. (A non-apron pain reliever should be used by children and young adults because of the risk of Reyes’s syndrome.)

SHOULD I GO TO WORK IF I HAVE THE FLU BUT AM FEELING OK?

No. Whether you have influenza A (H1N1) or a seasonal flu, you should stay home and away from work throughout the duration of your symptoms. This is a precaution that can protect your work colleagues and others.

CAN I TRAVEL?

If you are feeling unwell or have symptoms of influenza, you should not travel. If you have any doubts about your health, you should check with your health care provider.

Protect yourself:
- Clean your hands regularly;
- Wash your hands with soap and water, and dry them thoroughly;
- Use alcohol-based hand rub if you don’t have immediate access to soap and water.

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INFLUENZA A (H1N1)
SWINE FLU

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0800 00 5133

Fighting Disease, Fighting Poverty, Giving Hope
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