

H1N1...THE FACTS

H1N1 flu is upon us and we need to be aware of information regarding the illness and its symptoms. Here is a comparison between H1N1 and normal cold symptoms. [Know the Difference between a Cold and H1N1 Flu Symptoms:](#)

Symptom	Cold	H1N1
Fever	Fever is rare with a cold.	Fever is usually present with the flu in up to 80% of all flu cases. A temperature of 100°F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the H1N1 flu.
Coughing	A hacking, productive (mucus-producing) cough is often present with a cold.	A non-productive (non-mucus producing) cough is usually present with the H1N1 flu (sometimes referred to as dry cough).
Aches	Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.	Severe aches and pains are common with the H1N1 flu.
Stuffy Nose	Stuffy nose is commonly present with a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.	Stuffy nose is not commonly present with the H1N1 flu.
Chills	Chills are uncommon with a cold.	60% of people who have the H1N1 flu experience chills.
Tiredness	Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.	Tiredness is moderate to severe with the H1N1 flu.
Sneezing	Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.	Sneezing is not common with the H1N1 flu.
Sudden Symptoms	Cold symptoms tend to develop over a few days.	The H1N1 flu has a rapid onset within 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.
Headache	A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.	A headache is very common with the H1N1 flu, present in 80% of flu cases.
Sore Throat	Sore throat is commonly present with a cold.	Sore throat is not commonly present with the H1N1 flu.
Chest Discomfort	Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.	Chest discomfort is often severe with the H1N1 flu.

Please pass this information on to family and friends. Especially families with children!

The only way to stop the spread of the epidemic is to spread the awareness

The following makes a lot of sense and is important for all to know.

Do not underestimate these simple, inexpensive, powerful preventative methods.

The only portals of entry on the body are the nostrils, mouth, and throat. In a global epidemic of this nature, it is almost impossible to avoid coming into contact with H1N1 in spite of all precautions. Contact with H1N1 is not as much of a problem as proliferation (reproducing rapidly).

While you are still healthy and not showing any symptoms of H1N1 infection, and in order to prevent proliferation, aggravation of symptoms, and development of secondary infections, some very simple steps that are not fully highlighted in most official communications can be practiced (instead of focusing on how to stock up of preventative medicines):

- **Frequent hand-washing.**
- **Hands-off-the-face approach.** Resist all temptations to touch any part of the face, except to eat or bathe.
- **Gargle twice a day** with warm, salt water, or you can use Listerine or Hydrogen Peroxide). H1N1 takes two to three days after initial infection in the throat or nasal cavity to proliferate and show characteristic symptoms.
- **Similar to gargling, clean your nostrils** at least once every day with warm salt water or hydrogen peroxide. Blowing the nose softly once a day and swabbing both nostrils with cotton buds dipped in warm, salt water is very effective in bringing down viral population.
- **Boost your natural immunity** with foods that are rich in Vitamin C. If you must supplement with tablets, make sure that it also contains Zinc to boost absorption.
- **Drink as much warm liquid as possible** (tea, coffee, etc.) Drinking warm liquids has the same effect as gargling, but in reverse. The liquids wash proliferating viruses from the throat into the stomach where they cannot survive, proliferate, or do any harm.

How to Care for a Patient with H1N1 Flu Virus

NOTE: This guidance document is provided through the Public Health Agency of Canada in response to the recent outbreak of H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu) in Canada. It has been developed to assist people in caring for someone at home who is recuperating from the virus. Based on current available scientific evidence about this emerging disease, this guidance is subject to review and change as new information becomes available.

Six Steps to Recovery

1. Protect yourself and others.

If possible, have the ill person wear a simple surgical mask if you or someone else is in the same room within two meters (six feet) of him/her. If the ill person cannot tolerate a mask, encourage the use of a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you are going to be within two meters (six feet), you should also wear a surgical mask and safety glasses.

Clean your hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer before and after putting on or taking off a mask, after touching anything that an ill person has touched, i.e., dishes, towels, clothes, trash before you eat and before touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

2. Allow the ill person to rest away from others.

Anyone ill with H1N1 flu virus is estimated to be contagious for seven days from the onset of the illness and should stay at home. They should generally stay at least two meters (six feet) away from others, preferably in a well-ventilated room of their own. Ill people need plenty of rest and visitors should be few, if any at all. Phone calls and a few distractions like a good book are helpful. Clean the phone or other surfaces with a bleach-based cleaner after use by the ill person as the virus can survive on a hard surface for up to two days.

3. Treat the fever and cough.

"Coughs and sneezes spread diseases." The spray from coughing or sneezing contains the H1N1 virus. The ill person should cover the cough with a tissue or his/her arm. Tissues should be carefully placed in a waste basket and then the hands cleaned with soap and water or a hand sanitizer. If required, administer a mild cough suppressant, especially at night to help them sleep. It is not recommended to give children less than six years old cough suppressant. Fever often comes with chills or aches and pains. Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen every 4-6 hours may help to bring down the fever and take away the aches. Do not give aspirin to children with fever as it has been linked to Reye's Syndrome, a potentially fatal disease associated with aspirin consumption by children with viral diseases. A cool cloth to the face and neck or

over the whole body can help the fever as well. If antiviral medications have been prescribed, ensure they finish the prescription and follow the directions for administering.

4. **Administer plenty of fluids, nutritious food, and ensure a smoke-free environment.** This all helps the body recover.

5. **Keep the belongings of the ill person separate from others, and be careful of anything they handle.**

Each ill person should have his/her own towel, face cloth, toothbrush, etc., that are kept away from those who are well. Wash dishes, dirty laundry and towels with hot water and soap as soon as you take them out of the room. Always clean your hands afterwards and avoid touching your eyes. Line their garbage with a plastic bag so you do not have to touch the contents. Ideally, have a garbage bin with a foot pedal so you do not have to touch the garbage to put something in it. You can disinfect your door knobs and light switches with a bleach-based cleaner or by cleaning them with a mixture that is one part bleach and 10 parts water. Clean the bathroom daily.

6. **Be on the alert for complications.**

Following these instructions, most people will begin to feel better after a few days. However, be on the lookout. Sometimes, complications such as asthma or pneumonia arise and the ill person may require a health assessment.

Take his/her temperature daily. Here are some signs to look for:

- Starts to feel better, then the fever returns.
- Wheezing, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing, coughing up blood.
- Purplish or bluish lip color.
- Chest pain
- Hard to wake up
- Unusually quiet or unresponsive
- Strange thoughts or actions
- New onset of diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- Signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing and low urine production

If any of the above complications occur, call a health care provider for advice. If the ill person needs to seek medical care, they should wear a surgical mask if available. This is especially important if the ill person is using public transportation. Monitor yourself and other family members for flu symptoms.

Tips on Masks and Glasses

Tie the mask securely behind your head, and make sure the mask fully covers your nose and mouth. Replace the mask when it becomes wet or damp. A mask only works when it is dry. Avoid touching your face while wearing the mask. Do not let the mask hang around your neck.

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and discard after use. Remove the mask by only touching the straps and place the used mask directly in the garbage. Wash your hands immediately.

Surgical masks are quite inexpensive and can be purchased at your local pharmacy. If you do not have a mask, other options such as covering your nose and mouth with a bandana could also provide protection, however; remember to launder after use. Respirators will not provide any more protection than surgical masks unless they are properly fit-tested.

Safety glasses are available at all hardware stores. You could also wear wrap-around sports glasses.