

Novel H1N1 Influenza

What is the Novel Influenza (H1N1)?

Novel H1N1 is a new flu virus that causes a respiratory illness similar to the normal seasonal flu, but because it has a new virus it may cause more people to get sick. Most people who have become ill with this new virus have recovered without requiring medical treatment. Some people with chronic medical conditions may become more severely ill.

How is it spread?

Novel H1N1 virus is spread by droplets that are expelled by speaking, sneezing, or coughing. It can also be spread by touching contaminated hands, objects or surfaces then touching your own eyes, nose, or mouth.

What are the symptoms of H1N1 Influenza?

The symptoms of novel 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 also may have diarrhea and vomiting. Also, like seasonal flu, severe illnesses and death has occurred as a result of the illness associated with this virus.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

There is a vaccine available, but only 2,500 are in Lincoln. We recommend that your child get the vaccine as well as our staff. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health.

- Cover your cough! Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not into your hands. 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 quickly this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with people that are sick

If you become ill with these symptoms and you should stay home until your fever is gone for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicine.

For more information, call Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8053 or visit www.flu.gov