



**Garrett County Health Department**

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## **Novel H1N1 Influenza– Information for the Public**

### **Here is what you should know about H1N1 ('swine') influenza:**

Swine influenza can be transmitted in the same ways as seasonal influenza:

- a) By being in close contact with an individual who is infected with the flu. When that person coughs or sneezes, he or she may transmit the virus through the air to a susceptible individual who is within 6 feet of that sick person.
- b) By touching surfaces that have been contaminated with the virus and then touching your nose, mouth, or eyes.

### **Here is what you should do if you are sick with the flu:**

- 1) Stay home for 7 days after onset of illness or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer.
- 2) Avoid close contact with others. Also avoid sharing personal items, such as toothbrushes, cigarettes or drinks with non-infected people.
- 3) Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve.
- 4) Wash your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rubs after coughing or sneezing.
- 5) When cleaning your home, focus on the most frequently touched surfaces, such as door knobs, bedside tables, bathroom surfaces, and children's toys.
- 6) If you must leave your home, you should wear a surgical mask to help prevent infecting other people.
- 7) Most people don't need medication for the flu, but you should check with your doctor, especially if you have chronic medical conditions. Drink plenty of clear liquids and get plenty of rest.

### **Here is what your family or household members should do to protect themselves:**

- 1) All household members should monitor themselves closely for the development of flu-like illness, such as fever, sore throat, and cough.
- 2) Sick people should not have visitors while they are ill. If anyone who does not live with the patient must enter the home, they should avoid contact with the sick person.
- 3) All people in the household, especially those who must come in close contact with the sick person, should wash their hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after every contact with that person.
- 4) Close contacts may consider using a surgical mask when caring for ill persons.
- 5) If you or another household member has a chronic medical condition, check with your doctor about taking medication to prevent complications.
- 6) Also refer to CDC guidance on caring for persons with H1N1 at home:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm)

Please call your doctor or your Health Department if you have any further questions.