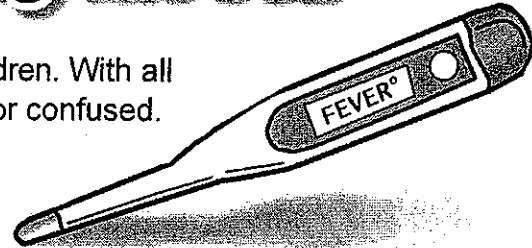


# Take Action to Help Prevent Your Child From Getting the Flu

No one likes to be sick or, even worse, have sick children. With all the news reports about the flu, you may be worried or confused. You may be wondering what is different this year.



## Types of Flu

The flu, short for influenza, is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs. We have known about **seasonal flu** for years. It is called seasonal flu because it happens every year. Flu season is usually November through March. Each year, 5 to 20 percent of people in the U.S. get the flu. Many different viruses cause seasonal flu. Viruses that cause the flu change all the time. That is why a new flu shot is needed each fall.

Now, a new type of flu is in the news. This new type of flu is called **H1N1** or swine flu. It is also called "novel," which means "new." Because the H1N1 virus is new, most people's immune systems don't know how to fight it. Therefore, it is spreading rapidly from person to person.

The H1N1 flu has been declared a pandemic. That sounds scary. It means that it has spread rapidly around the world. It isn't necessarily more dangerous than seasonal flu. Because H1N1 is new, it is more important than ever to prevent it from spreading.

## How Does the Flu Spread?

Flu viruses, including H1N1, spread from person to person by:

- coughing,
- sneezing, or
- touching something that has flu viruses on it, like a door handle, and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

## No Need for Panic - Just Take Action to Stay Healthy

You and your family can avoid getting any type of flu by taking these easy steps. You already know most of the ideas. We just need to work together to help everyone take action.

### Vaccinate!

Check with your family doctor or local health department about having every member of your family vaccinated against the seasonal flu and H1N1. This means getting two separate vaccinations. Each vaccine protects you against a specific type of flu. The H1N1 vaccine may require two shots and may be available as a nasal spray. It is especially important to have children vaccinated. Children are most likely to get sick from the H1N1 flu virus. Because they are in contact with lots of other children and families through school and other activities, they can spread the flu easily.

People who belong to one of these groups should be the first to get the H1N1 vaccine.



- People between 6 months and 25 years of age
- People 25-64 years of age who have medical conditions
- Pregnant women
- Healthcare workers
- People caring for infants under 6 months of age

Page 2 will give you more ideas!

# Take Action to Avoid Getting the Flu

## Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.

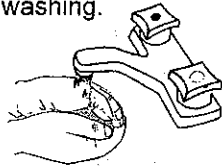
Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue, not into your hand. If you use a tissue, be sure to throw it away. If you have to use your hand, be sure to wash it.



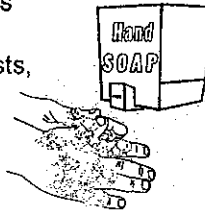
## Wash your hands often.

Your hands touch many things during a day. Keeping them clean will help avoid getting germs into your body. Teach your child what each of these letters stands for: G-E-R-M-S. Then, he or she will know the steps for proper hand washing.

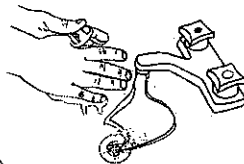
**G**et your hands wet while the water is running.



**E**nergetically, use soap and rub your hands together. Work up a good lather, washing vigorously for 18 to 20 seconds; include wrists, back of hands, between fingers, and under fingernails. A good way to make sure you wash long enough is to count to 20 or hum a song, such as Happy Birthday or Row, Row, Row Your Boat. You need to hum it twice.



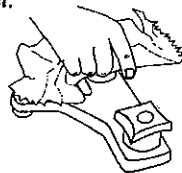
**R**inse your hands and let the water drip into the sink.



**M**ake sure you dry your hands with an individual towel or paper towel.



**S**hut off the faucet handle with the used towel. Use the same towel to open the door of the bathroom. Then, throw it away.



Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water isn't available.

## Stay home when sick.

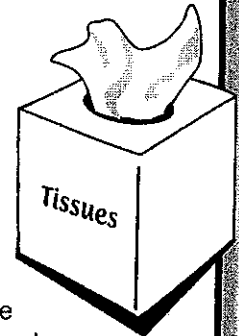
Be sure sick family members stay home and do not have contact with other people. They should stay home until their fever has been gone for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

**Eat a healthy diet,  
be physically active, and  
get plenty of sleep to  
maintain overall health.**

## How Will I Know If Someone Has the Flu?

H1N1 and seasonal flu symptoms are the same:

- Headache
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Fever
- Body aches
- Cough
- Some people have vomiting and/or diarrhea.



## What If Someone in My Family Gets Sick?

Most of the time people get better by staying home, resting, and drinking lots of liquids. But if symptoms are very severe or get worse quickly, call your doctor right away.

## Get the Most Up-to-Date Information!

Contact:

- Your local health department
- Your family doctor

Visit these websites:

- Michigan Department of Community Health:  
[www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

[www.michiganmodel.org](http://www.michiganmodel.org)

