Steps to Care for Someone with New Flu A H1N1 (Previously Called Swine Flu) at Home
Introduction

• Use these tips to care for someone that has any type of flu, including new flu A H1N1, in your home.

• Advice may change as new information becomes available.
You and Your Family Should...

- **Stay home** and rest if you have flu-like symptoms:
  - Fatigue
  - Fever
  - Coughing
  - Sore throat

- By staying home, you...
  - Avoid getting others sick
  - Avoid overcrowding emergency rooms
You and Your Family Should...

• Wash your hands **often** using soap and warm water for 20 seconds each time

• Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve

• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
You and Your Family Should…

- Get emergency medical care **ONLY** if you have any of these symptoms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Children</th>
<th>In Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fast or difficulty breathing</td>
<td>Difficulty breathing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purple or bluish skin</td>
<td>Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unable to drink enough liquids</td>
<td>Sudden dizziness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unable to wake up or respond</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irritability</td>
<td>Vomiting that is severe or ongoing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fever and skin rash</td>
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</table>

![Ambulance Image]
You and Your Family Should...

- Know that **antiviral** medicines:
  - Aren’t always necessary
  - Don’t cure any flu
  - Require a prescription

- Never share prescribed medication

- Know that antibiotics will **not** work:
  - Can’t kill a flu *virus* because it’s not a bacteria
  - Can make bacteria resistant to medication if taken incorrectly

- Tell your healthcare provider if you’re taking other medicine
  - Over-the-counter medicine
  - Prescription medicine

- Do **not** take supplements like diet pills, vitamins, home remedies, or herbal mixtures
## Managing Symptoms: *Fever*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>98.6°F to 99.6°F</th>
<th>37.0°C to 37.5°C</th>
<th><strong>Normal range</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self care:</strong> Avoid giving fever-reducing medicine, unless having aches and pains. Monitor carefully for changes or new symptoms. Drink extra fluids.</td>
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<tr>
<td>99.6°F to 102°F</td>
<td>37.5°C to 38.8°C</td>
<td><strong>Caution:</strong> Follow label instructions and give fever-reducing medicine. Monitor carefully for changes or new symptoms. Do <strong>not</strong> take aspirin or any medicine with aspirin. Drink extra fluids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102°F to 104°F</td>
<td>38.8°C to 40.0°C</td>
<td><strong>Seek medical help:</strong> Give fever-reducing medicine until help is received. Try giving the person a lukewarm sponge bath. Use cool compresses. Monitor the person carefully. Do <strong>not</strong> use cold water or alcohol to give a bath. Drink extra fluids.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **104°F and over** | **40°C and over** | * temperature taken orally

* temperature taken orally
Managing Symptoms: Sore Throat

- Use throat lozenges or hard candy
  - Halls®, Vicks®, Sucrets®
- Drink plenty of fluids
  - Water, hot tea, juice
- Use an anesthetic throat spray
  - Chloraseptic®, Cepacol®
- Take a non-prescription, non-aspirin pain reliever
  - Advil®, Tylenol®, Aleve®
- Use a humidifier
- Do not smoke or use tobacco products
- Gargle with warm salt water
Managing Symptoms: Cough

• Drink plenty of fluids
  – Water, hot tea, juice
• Suck on lozenge or hard candy
  – Halls®, Vicks®, Sucrets®
• Use a humidifier
• Sleep with your head elevated
• Use a non-prescription expectorant or cough suppressant medicines
  – Mucinex®
• Do **not** smoke or use tobacco products
Managing Symptoms: Dehydration in Babies & Children

• Drink fluids often and in small amounts
  – Fluids should contain some sugars and some salts
  – Use electrolyte drinks (Pedialyte®)
  – Avoid caffeine and soda
• Contact your healthcare provider if your baby/child has any of these symptoms:
  – Lack of energy, weakness, irritability
  – Decreased urination or strong odor
  – Sunken eyes, skin does not snap back
  – Soft spot on baby’s head
  – Tearless crying
Managing Symptoms: Dehydration in Adults

• Drink fluids often and in small amounts
  – Fluids should contain some sugars and some salts
  – Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and soda
• Use electrolyte drinks (Gatorade®)
• Contact your healthcare provider if you have any of these symptoms:
  – Dry mouth or eyes
  – Lack of energy, weakness, irritability
  – Headache or muscle cramping
  – Decreased urine output or strong odor
  – Dizziness, lightheadedness, rapid heart beat
  – Sunken eyes, skin does not snap back
  – Confusion
Managing Symptoms: *Nausea/Vomiting*

- Avoid dehydration
- Sip clear fluids
  - Chicken broth, hot tea, etc.
- Avoid:
  - Solid foods
  - Dairy products
  - Alcohol
  - Caffeine
  - Tobacco products
- Return to normal diet slowly
Managing Symptoms: Diarrhea

• Drink water and other clear fluids
  – Chicken broth, hot tea, etc.
• Use electrolyte drinks
  – Gatorade®, Pedialyte®
• Add solid foods slowly
  – BRAT Diet: Bananas, Rice, Applesauce, Toast
• Avoid:
  – Caffeine
  – Dairy
  – Fatty, spicy foods
  – Tobacco products
• Practice good hygiene
  – Wash hands often, do not touch eyes, nose or mouth
Medicines To Help Lessen Flu Symptoms

• Antiviral medications can be prescribed to treat flu symptoms
  – Prescription is required
  – Check with your healthcare provider or pharmacist for safe and correct use
  – Most people do not need antiviral drugs to fully recover

• Over-the-counter cold and flu medications
  – Be sure to read the instructions
Medicines To Help Lessen Flu Symptoms in Adults

- Do **not** use medications that contain aspirin (*acetylsalicylic acid*) to treat flu symptoms
  - Avoid Excedrin®, Pamprin®, Alka-Seltzer®, Pepto-Bismol®,
  - Aspirin can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye’s Syndrome
  - **Read the labels**
- Fevers and aches can be treated with aspirin-free pain relievers, such as:
  - Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
  - Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®)
  - Naproxen (Aleve®)
Medicines To Help Lessen Flu Symptoms in Teens

Teenagers with the flu:

• Only take medicine without aspirin:
  – Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
  – Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, or Nuprin®)
Medicines To Help Lessen Flu Symptoms in Children

• Children younger than 2 years of age:
  – It is safest to use a cool-mist humidifier and a suction bulb to help clear away mucus
  – Do **not** give over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a healthcare provider
Comfort and Care at Home

• Most people with the flu can be cared for at home

• Care should focus on:
  – Helping sick person feel comfortable
  – Controlling fever
  – Preventing dehydration
  – Preventing spread of infections to others

• Try to have a separate quiet room with a clean bed

*This is an example of a comfortable room set up for someone with the flu.

Source: Pat Jackson-Allen, Yale School of Nursing

*This is an example of a comfortable room set up for someone with the flu.
Sleeping Arrangements for Bedrooms

• To avoid sick person sleeping head-to-head with any other beds in the room:
  – Rearrange beds
  – Adjust sleeping positions (have someone sleeping with their head at the foot of the bed)

• In larger rooms, create temporary physical barriers between the beds using sheets or curtains
Protect Yourself and Others Who are Not Sick

• Keep the sick person away from others
  – Separate individuals by 3-6 feet when possible
  – Let them use a separate room and bathroom if possible
  – Have them avoid common living areas
  – Have one person be the caregiver
    • Make sure the caregiver is not a pregnant woman
  – Avoid having visitors
  – Separate personal hygiene items
Protect Yourself and Others Who are Not Sick

• Persons with the flu shouldn’t leave the home:
  – If they have a fever
  – When they are most likely to spread their infection to others:
    • 7 days after symptoms appear in adults
    • 10 days after symptoms appear in children
  – Unless necessary for medical care
• If the person who is sick needs to go out, have them wear a surgical mask
• Open windows in shared areas to keep good air flow/circulation
• Watch yourself and other household members for flu symptoms
• Contact a healthcare provider if you have severe symptoms
If People in Your Home Are Sick, They Should:

- Check with their healthcare provider
  - Ask if they should take antiviral medications
  - Mention if they have special medical needs or other medical conditions (e.g. pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, diabetes)
- Stay in bed for seven days after the first day of fever
- Drink clear fluids to keep from being dehydrated
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve
- Wash hands with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- Avoid close contact with others, which includes staying home from work or school
When to Seek Emergency Medical Care

• Get emergency medical care right away if the person has any of these symptoms:
  – Difficulty breathing or chest pains
  – Purple or blue discoloration of the lips
  – Vomiting and unable to keep liquids down
  – Signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry
  – Seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions)
  – Less responsive than normal or becomes confused
General Housekeeping

• Good housekeeping habits help protect yourself and others
  – Soaps, detergents, and household disinfectants work well to kill flu germs

WASH YOUR HANDS
Laundry Tips

- For linens, use laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting
- Avoid “hugging” dirty laundry when handling it to prevent contaminating yourself
- Wash laundry soiled with vomit, feces separately
- Clean your hands with soap and warm water or alcohol-based hand rub right after handling dirty laundry
Cleaning Tips

• Keep surfaces and objects clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant
  – Read the directions on the product label

• Eating utensils:
  – Use a dishwasher or wash by hand with hot water and soap

• Trash disposal:
  – Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash
  – Use disposable plastic bags to line waste baskets
Key Points

• The best way to avoid getting the flu does **not** include wearing a mask
• Instead, you should:
  – Wash your hands often with soap and warm water
  – Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
  – Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve
  – Stay home if you’re sick
For More Information

• United States:
  – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
    • 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
    • www.cdc.gov/swineflu

• California:
  – California Department of Public Health
    • 1-888-865-0564
    • www.cdph.ca.gov

• Los Angeles County:
  – County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
    • Call 2-1-1 from any phone
    • www.publichealth.lacounty.gov