



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**



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**Information for Communities Concerned about H1N1 Influenza**

Over the past month, much has been learned about H1N1 influenza. This virus currently appears to be acting like seasonal influenza in terms of the severity of illness and transmission of infection. We recognize that cases that have no relationship to travel or to other identified cases are occurring in communities, and that it is not possible to identify every case of H1N1 influenza because the symptoms are similar to those of other acute respiratory infections. We also know that we have other acute viral respiratory infections circulating in New Hampshire. Therefore we recommend an approach that will focus on decreasing transmission of infections to others. This will provide an approach for all communities to strengthen their measures to control the spread of infections whether or not a case is identified as H1N1 influenza in your community. We will all need to continue to work together to control the spread of illness in our communities.

Whether or not there is a confirmed case of H1N1 influenza in your community, it is most likely there. You should assume that you could be exposed to H1N1 influenza at school, at work, or anywhere else in your community. Therefore, it is very important to take common sense precautions to protect yourself. Those precautions include:

- Washing your hands frequently with soap and warm water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Staying away from people who are coughing or sneezing
- Covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue, or cough into your sleeve if you don't have one.
- Take this opportunity to reinforce both of these messages with your kids. Teach them how to keep themselves from getting sick, and how not to spread disease to others
- Stay at home if you have mild-flu like illness (stay at home until 24 hours after all symptoms have resolved). Individuals are generally infectious for 5-7 days.

Signs and symptoms of H1N1 Influenza are similar to those of seasonal influenza and include the following:

- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches
- Cough
- Sore throat

It is recommended that persons at high risk for complications from influenza infection should consult with their doctor if they are experiencing signs or symptoms of influenza. While we continue to learn more about novel H1N1 influenza, groups at high risk for complications from seasonal influenza include:

- Children less than 5 years old (highest risk among children less than 2 years old)
- All persons aged 65 years or older
- Children and adolescents (<18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza infection
- Pregnant women

- Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary (including asthma) cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus)
- Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV)
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities