

# Preparing for the Flu

## (Including 2009 H1N1 Flu)

A Communication Toolkit for Community and Faith-based Organizations



## Preparing for the Flu: A Communication Toolkit for Community and Faith-based Organizations

The purpose of “Preparing for the Flu: A Communication Toolkit for Community and Faith-based Organizations” is to provide fact sheets, easy-to-use template letters or e-mails, and other materials to assist community and faith-based organizations (CFBOs) communicate about the flu, including seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu, with their staff, members, and those served in their communities. This document is a companion toolkit for “H1N1 Flu: A Guide for Community and Faith-based Organizations,” which is available online at: <http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html#APPA>.

The toolkit includes:

- ▶ **2 Fact Sheets for Community and Faith-based Organizations**
  - *Action Steps for Community and Faith-based Organizations to Prevent the Spread of Flu*
  - *Additional Community and Faith-based Organization Action Steps for Gatherings, Meetings, and Programs to Minimize Spread of Flu*
- ▶ **2 Fact Sheets for Members and Those Served by Community and Faith-based Organizations**
  - *Action Steps to Protect You and Your Family from the Flu*
  - *Action Steps for People at Higher Risk for Flu Complications*
- ▶ **2 Posters**
  - *STOP! Do You Feel Sick?*
  - *Cover Your Cough*
- ▶ **3 Template Letters (or E-mails) to Send to Members and Those Served by Community and Faith-based Organizations**
  - *Flu Season is Starting. Get Ready Now!*
  - *If You Are Not Feeling Well*
  - *Staying Healthy*



**Fact Sheets for Community and  
Faith-based Organizations**

# Action Steps for Community and Faith-based Organizations to Prevent the Spread of Flu

## Prepare your organization.

- ▶ Identify and create points of contact with your local public health department or agency.
- ▶ Develop a plan to cover key staff positions when staff members need to stay home because they are sick or caring for sick family members.
- ▶ “H1N1 Flu: A Guide for Community and Faith-based Organizations” for more action steps your organization can take to keep community members healthy during flu season. The guide is available at [www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html](http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html).
- ▶ Review and revise existing pandemic flu and all-hazards or disaster plans.

## Prepare your staff.

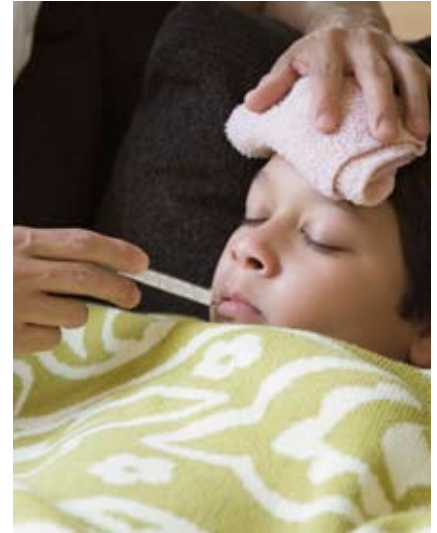
- ▶ Prepare your staff.
- ▶ Encourage all staff (both volunteer and paid) to get vaccinated for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu in accordance with CDC recommendations. Information about 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination). Information about seasonal flu vaccine can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm).
- ▶ Educate and encourage staff to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and to throw the tissue away after use. If they don't have a tissue, they should cough or sneeze into their elbows or shoulder, not into their hands. Display reminder posters <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/materials.htm>
- ▶ Remind staff to wash hands regularly, and provide the time and supplies for them to do so. Hands should be washed often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.
- ▶ Remind staff to stay home and parents/caregivers to keep a sick child at home when they have flu-like symptoms.



### ▶ Flu symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Tiredness
- Sometimes vomiting and diarrhea with 2009 H1N1.

- ▶ Send sick staff home immediately. Ask them not to return until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius measured by mouth) or signs of a fever (chills, feeling very warm, flushed appearance, or sweating), without the need for a medicine to reduce fever such as Tylenol™, aspirin, or Motrin™.
- ▶ Routinely clean surfaces and items that are frequently touched by different people, such as doorknobs, faucets, and telephones. Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of Encourage staff at higher risk for complications from flu to consult their healthcare provider if they become sick with flu-like symptoms. Pregnant women, children under 5 years of age, and people with certain chronic health conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes) are at higher risk for flu complications and may benefit from early treatment with antiviral medicines if they are sick with flu.
- ▶ Consider temporarily closing children’s programs if flu is widespread in the community, if the number of staff and children staying home makes it difficult for the early childhood program to operate, or if local health officials recommend temporarily closing early childhood programs to decrease the spread of flu in your community. Work closely with your local public health officials to make this decision.



## Prepare Your Community.

- ▶ Spread the word about what your members can do to prepare for the flu and how to stay healthy during the 2009-2010 flu season.
- ▶ Share “[H1N1 Flu: A Guide for Community and Faith-based Organizations](http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html)” with leaders and other organizations in your community, available at <http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html>.
- ▶ Check [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) for the most up-to-date information on current recommendations.
- ▶ Institute a “Healthy Habits” or “Flu Facts” section in your newsletter, bulletin, and Web site.
- ▶ Sponsor a community lecture series on preventing and treating the flu.
- ▶ Develop a “buddy” system to help ensure vulnerable and hard-to-reach community members stay connected to flu-related news and services. These may include low-income people and families; non-English speakers; homeless people and families; shut-in or homebound individuals; migrant workers, immigrants and refugees; and people with physical, sensory, mental health, intellectual, and cognitive disabilities.

- ▶ Encourage the general public and families to be prepared for flu by distributing the fact sheets, posters, letters, and other information in this toolkit.

## Support state and local health departments' vaccination efforts.

- ▶ Help people understand the primary vaccination target groups for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu.
- ▶ Encourage primary vaccination target groups to get their flu vaccinations.
- ▶ Offer your facilities as sites for vaccination programs in partnership with your state or local health department.
- ▶ Provide information about where and when vaccinations are available.
- ▶ Tailor health department information on vaccinations to meet the specific cultural or religious needs of your community.



### Box 1: 2009 H1N1 Flu Primary Vaccine Target Groups

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months old
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- People aged 25 through 64 years with chronic health conditions (including asthma, heart disease, diabetes, HIV, weakened immune systems, and other disorders)

### For more information:

- ▶ **Visit: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)**
- ▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
  - 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)
  - TTY: (888) 232-6348
  - [www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov-based](mailto:www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov-based)



# Additional Community and Faith-based Organization Action Steps for Gatherings, Meetings, and Programs to Minimize Spread of Flu

Many faith-based and community groups hold services or meetings that bring people together. If the flu is causing more severe disease, CDC and your local health department may suggest that people avoid close contact with others and avoid attending large gatherings, a practice often called social distancing. These measures are intended to slow the spread of flu. Religious traditions and obligations may make it difficult to implement social distancing measures.

However, faith-based and other community groups can do some specific things to help keep their members healthy.

- ▶ To the extent possible, ***make decisions in accordance with your state and local health departments about community gatherings and religious services*** if there is widespread flu illness in your community. ***People should not be discouraged from gathering unless advised by public health officials.***
  - ***Encourage people with flu-like illness to stay home.*** The spread of flu may be decreased if people with flu-like illness stay home for at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without the need for fever-reducing medicines (such as Tylenol™, aspirin, or Motrin™).
- ▶ If there is widespread flu in your community, ***discuss the risks of attending gatherings for those at high risk for medical complications from flu (such as children, pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions) and for those who have not been vaccinated.*** By avoiding gatherings, these people may reduce their risk of becoming sick with flu.
- ▶ ***Provide alternative options and venues for participation whenever possible*** for people who are sick, home-bound, or have a higher risk for flu complications and will not be able to attend gatherings. Check [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/public\\_gatherings.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/public_gatherings.htm) for additional guidance on holding public gatherings, including religious services.
- ▶ ***Remind participants to cover their mouths and noses with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue in the trash after use.*** If they don't have a tissue, they should cough or sneeze into their elbow or shoulder, not into their hands.

- ▶ ***Make tissues and hand washing facilities with soap and running water widely available*** during gatherings and religious services.
- ▶ ***Remind all participants to wash hands frequently*** and to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.
- ▶ ***Reduce crowding*** as much as possible.
- ▶ ***Identify which activities may increase the chance of spreading flu.*** Work with your local health department to make decisions about changing or limiting these activities to help keep people healthy.
  - People gathering close to one another may increase the risk of spreading the flu.
  - Many religious services and community meetings involve a time of greeting or recognition by shaking hands or hugging. Encouraging communication without physical contact and encouraging people to maintain a few feet of distance from each other may reduce the spread of flu in your community.
  - Some religious traditions and rituals emphasize eating and drinking from communal dishes and vessels. Flu may spread in these conditions. If flu is circulating widely in your community, faith and community leaders may consider adjusting such practices in order to reduce the spread of flu. Check with your local or state health department and <http://www.flu.gov>.
- ▶ ***Make sure children and youth can continue learning while out of school.*** For example, your organization could:
  - Work with local schools to prepare learning materials, equipment, or books that could be useful for teaching and caring for children at home. Think about using local expertise and resources, like your organization's library or community members who are trained in education. See <http://free.ed.gov> for more information.
  - Make sure students have what they need. Transport books, assignments, and completed work between the classroom and a sick child's home (and vice versa).
- ▶ ***Provide nutritious meals to children normally receiving school lunches.*** A good resource for creating healthy meals for infants, children, and adults is available at: [www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal\\_Patterns.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm).



- ▶ ***Talk with your local health department now to determine ways in which your volunteers and facilities might be useful during the response to 2009 H1N1 flu.***
- ▶ ***Plan for financial impacts associated with the 2009-2010 flu season and 2009 H1N1 flu response.***
  - Budget: Consider the impact of the 2009-2010 flu season, 2009 H1N1 flu response, and other unforeseen emergencies that can lead to a shortage of funds.
  - Charitable development strategies: Since many nonprofit organizations rely on community giving to support their activities, consider using alternative means of receiving contributions, such as by mail or the internet.

### **For more information:**

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  - TTY: (888) 232-6348
  - [www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov-based](mailto:www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov-based)
- ▶ **Read H1N1 flu: A guide for Community and Faith-based Organizations.** It is available at <http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html>

**Fact Sheets For Members and  
Those Served by Community  
and Faith-based Organizations**

# Action Steps to Protect You and Your Family from the Flu

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends four main ways you and your family may keep from getting the flu this season:

1. ***Get your family vaccinated*** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu (if recommended). For more information on the recommendations for who should receive seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines, see [www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm) (seasonal) and [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm) (2009 H1N1)
2. ***People sick with the flu should stay home*** for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius measured by mouth) or signs of a fever (chills, feeling very warm, flushed appearance, or sweating) without the need for fever-reducing medicine. Keeping sick people at home means that they keep their viruses to themselves rather than sharing them with others.
3. ***Cover your mouth and nose*** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and then throw it away in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Teach your children how to do this.
4. ***Practice good hand hygiene*** by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used. Parents and child care providers should wash the hands of children who cannot yet wash themselves and closely monitor children who have not yet mastered proper hand washing.

**Follow these steps to prepare for the flu during the 2009-2010 flu season:**

- ▶ ***Plan for child care at home if your child gets sick***, your usual early childhood program closes, or school is dismissed. Check with your employer to find out if you can stay at home to care for your children, work from home, or set up a flexible work schedule. If this is not possible, find other ways to care for your children at home (such as care by relatives, neighbors, co-workers, or friends).
- ▶ ***Plan to monitor the health of your family*** by checking for fever and other symptoms of flu.
- ▶ ***Identify people who are at higher risk for serious disease from the flu***, and urge them to talk to their healthcare provider about a plan to protect them during the flu season. People at higher risk of serious disease from the flu include: pregnant women, children under 5 years of age, people 65 years of age and older, and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes).
- ▶ ***Update emergency contact lists.***
- ▶ ***Collect games, books, DVDs and other items*** to keep your family entertained if early childhood programs are closed, school is dismissed, or your child is sick and must stay home.

**For more information:**

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- ▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
  - 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)
  - TTY: (888) 232-6348
  - [www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov)

# Action Steps for People at Higher Risk for Flu Complications

Pregnant women, children under 5 years of age, people 65 years of age and older, and people with chronic health problems (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, metabolic conditions, and neurologic and neuromuscular disorders) are at higher risk for having complications from flu.

If you are not sure if you or any family member is at higher risk for flu complications, you can find out at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/sick.htm> or check with your healthcare provider.

## ► **Keep yourself and others healthy.**

- **Get vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu (if recommended). It is especially important that parents and caregivers of children less than 6 months of age to get vaccinated. These children are at higher risk for flu complications and are too young to be vaccinated.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and then throw it away in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Teach your children how to do this.
- **Practice good** hand washing by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used. Parents and child care providers should wash the hands of children who cannot yet wash themselves and closely monitor children who have not yet mastered proper ability to wash hands.
- **Keep away from people who are sick.**
- **Clean surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.** Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.
- **Consider staying away from public gatherings if you are at higher risk for complications from the flu and have not been vaccinated.** When there is flu in your community, consider your risk of exposure if you attend public gatherings, such as sporting events and concerts. Staying away may reduce your chances of becoming sick.

## ► **Know if you are sick with the flu.**

- It is important to watch carefully for the signs and symptoms of flu. Symptoms of flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and tiredness. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with flu, including the 2009 H1N1 flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.
- Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention. These warning signs include one or more of the following:

- In children
    - Fast breathing, trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or stopping breathing
    - Bluish, purplish, or gray skin color, especially around the lips, inside the mouth, or around the nails
    - Not drinking enough fluids or refusing to drink
    - Not waking up or not interacting
    - Being irritable (a child may not want to be held or cannot be consoled)
    - Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
    - Fever with a rash
  - In adults
    - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
    - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
    - Sudden dizziness
    - Confusion
    - Severe or persistent vomiting
- ▶ **Tips for taking care of people sick with the flu:**
- **People at higher risk for complications because of age or a medical condition should contact their health care provider immediately to find out if antiviral flu medicines are recommended.** This is important because treatment with antiviral medicines that fight the flu should be started as early as possible. They work best when started within the first 2 days of getting sick. Your health care provider will tell you what special care is needed. For more information about high risk conditions, visit [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/certain\\_medical.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/2009-10/pdf/certain_medical.pdf)
  - **Know the warning signs of serious illness that require emergency treatment** (<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/sick.htm>).
  - **Keep sick people at home** until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever without the need for a fever-reducing medicine. Keep sick people home unless they need to go to their health care provider.
  - **Make sure sick people get plenty of rest and drink clear fluids** (such as water, broth, or sports drinks) to prevent dehydration. For infants, use electrolyte drinks (such as Pedialyte®).
  - **For a fever, use fever-reducing medicines** (such as Tylenol™, aspirin, or Motrin™) that your health care provider recommends. Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) should not be given to children or teenagers; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
  - **Keep the sick person in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver. This should not be someone at high risk for complications from the flu. Additional information about caring for sick household members can be found at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_home-care.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_home-care.htm).

### For more information:

- ▶ **Visit: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)**
- ▶ **Contact CDC 24 Hours/Every Day**
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  - TTY: (888) 232-6348
  - [www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:www.cdcinfo@cdc.gov)



***Stop! Do You Feel Sick?***  
**Poster**

# Do you feel sick?



**You may have the flu if you have fever or chills  
AND  
a cough or sore throat**

**You may also have a runny nose, body aches,  
a headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting**

**If you think you have the flu,  
stay home except  
to get medical care.**

**For more information visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)  
or call 1 (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)**



***Cover Your Cough***  
**Poster**



USE A TISSUE

BE A GERM STOPPER.



COVER MOUTH AND NOSE



CLEAN HANDS

## Cover Coughs and Sneezes. Clean Hands.

Be a germ stopper at school — and home. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue and throw it away.

### Clean your hands a lot

- After you sneeze or cough
- After using the bathroom
- Before you eat
- Before you touch your eyes, mouth or nose

**Washing hands with soap and water is best.** Wash long enough to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice. Or, use gels or wipes with alcohol in them. This alcohol kills germs!

**Stop germs. And stop colds and flu.**



[www.cdc.gov/germstopper](http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper)

**Template Letters (or E-mails)  
to Send to Members and  
Those Served by Community  
and Faith-based Organizations**



# Template letter or E-mail: Get Ready for Flu Season Now!

- ▶ *Coordinate efforts with your local health department before distributing this letter or e-mail communication to ensure that all information is timely, relevant, and accurate.*
- ▶ *This template can be customized and used as an announcement via e-mail, Web site, newsletter, or other creative media to reach members, service recipients and staff.*
- ▶ *Consider customizing this letter by using your organization's stationery or e-mail template, inserting a name and contact information of someone community members can reach for flu questions, adding the signature line of the president, executive director, clergy, etc.*

## Get Ready for Flu Season Now!

- ▶ **The flu season** lasts through the fall and winter. More than one kind of flu virus will be spreading this season, including seasonal flu and the 2009 H1N1 flu. If you get the flu, you can spread the flu to others at home, at work, and in the community.
- ▶ **Symptoms of flu** can include all or some of the following: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, tiredness, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.
- ▶ **Plan to stay home if you are sick** until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined after fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen) are no longer needed.
- ▶ **Be prepared.**
  - **Get the vaccine for seasonal flu as recommended.**
  - **Get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine if it is recommended for you.** Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm> to see if you are recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.
  - **Make plans to care for sick household members** or for children if schools dismiss students or early childhood programs close.

**Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home.** To help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick, have the following items on hand: a supply of fever-reducing medicines that contain acetaminophen or ibuprofen, alcohol-based hand rubs, and tissues.

- ▶ **Remember to cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.** Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- ▶ **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- ▶ **Wash your hands often with soap and water,** especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.

***If a severe flu outbreak hits our community, we will take additional steps to avoid spreading the flu virus.***



# Template letter or E-mail: If You Are Not Feeling Well

- ▶ *Coordinate efforts with your local health department before distributing this letter or e-mail communication to ensure that all information is timely, relevant, and accurate.*
- ▶ *This template can be customized and used as an announcement via e-mail, Web site, newsletter, or other creative media to reach members, service recipients and staff.*
- ▶ *Consider customizing this letter by using your organization's stationery or e-mail template, inserting a name and contact information of someone community members can reach for flu questions, and adding the signature line of the president, executive director, clergy, etc.*
- ▶ ***If you or a family member is not feeling well ...***
- ▶ ***Watch carefully for signs and symptoms of flu.*** Some children may not be able to tell you about their symptoms, which can delay your response to their illness. Symptoms of flu can include all or some of the following: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. Not everyone with flu will have a fever.
  - ***Watch for emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention.*** These warning signs include one or more of the following:
    - In children
      - Fast breathing, trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or stopping breathing
      - Bluish, purplish, or gray skin color especially around the lips, inside the mouth, or around the nails
      - Not drinking enough fluids; refusing to drink
      - Not waking up or not interacting
      - Being irritable(a child may not want to be held or cannot be consoled)
      - Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
      - Fever with a rash
    - In adults
      - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
      - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
      - Sudden dizziness
      - Confusion
      - Severe or persistent vomiting
  - ***Stay home. The person sick with the flu should stay home*** until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever without the need for fever-reducing medicine. Children and teenagers ***should not*** be given aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid); this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
  - ***Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids*** (such as water, broth, or sports drinks) to prevent dehydration. For infants, use an oral rehydration solution, such as Pedialyte®.
  - ***If the sick person is in a high risk group, contact a health care provider to discuss the need for antiviral medicines.*** This is important because treatment with antiviral medicines that fight the flu should be started as early as possible. They work best when started within the first 2 days of getting sick.

- **Keep the sick person in a separate room** (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating a single person as the main caregiver for the sick person. This person should not be at high risk for complications from the flu.
- ▶ **To protect other family members ...**
  - **Get your family vaccinated** for seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu according to CDC recommendations.
  - **Cough and sneeze into a tissue** or into your elbow or shoulder if a tissue is not available. Throw tissues away right after use.
  - **Make sure hands are washed often**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used. Help young children wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap and water (long enough to sing “The Happy Birthday Song” twice).
  - **Clean surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.** Wipe these surfaces with a household disinfectant, following the directions on the product label. Additional disinfection of these surfaces beyond routine cleaning is not recommended.

## Template letter or E-mail: Staying Healthy

- ▶ *Coordinate efforts with your local health department before distributing this letter or e-mail communication to ensure that all information is timely, relevant, and accurate.*
- ▶ *This template can be customized and used as an announcement via e-mail, Web site, newsletter, or other creative media to reach members, service recipients and staff.*
- ▶ *Consider customizing this letter by using your organization's stationery or e-mail template, inserting a name and contact information of someone community members can reach for flu questions, and adding the signature line of the president, executive director, clergy, etc.*

### Staying healthy

- ▶ **Important Actions to Take to Stay Healthy and Prevent the Spread of Germs**
  - **Get vaccinated for seasonal flu as recommended.** For more information about seasonal flu vaccination, visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm). *[Insert information about vaccination clinics or other ways to get vaccinated].*
    - **Get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine, if it is recommended for you.** Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm> to see if you are recommended to receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.
  - **Every time you cough or sneeze**, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, and throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hand.
  - **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub can be used.
  - **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
  - **Try to avoid close contact with sick people.**
  - **If you are at higher risk for complications** from the flu, talk to your healthcare provider about what you will need to do if you get sick. People at higher risk for flu complications include pregnant women, children younger than 5, people 65 and older, and people with certain chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes). Contact *[Insert name, telephone, e-mail address]* if you have any questions.
  - **Stay home if you get sick.** Keep children home if they get sick.

