



Epidemiology Unit

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Pandemic Influenza (H1N1) 2009 Outbreak

This disease is **generally a mild illness** similar to seasonal flu'. Its symptoms usually include fever, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, headache and muscle or joint pains. These symptoms may last for a few days up to a week and may not require specific anti viral treatment.

All patients with suspected H1N1 influenza attending to hospitals (government/private) will be screened to assess their illness and only patients with severe or progressive symptoms will be admitted to hospitals for laboratory diagnosis and treatment with specific anti virals. Those with mild illness would be managed as out patients with supportive medication and directed for home care.

The following measures are advised for H1N1 patients directed for home care:

Managing H1N1 Influenza at Home

- Take supportive medication as prescribed e.g. non aspirin drugs for fever, anti allergic drugs for sneezing and runny nose and antibiotics for a possible bacterial infection
- Stay away from work/school and other public places and crowded settings for either seven days after onset of symptoms, or until 24 hours after symptoms subside-whichever is longer
- Take bed rest
- Take plenty of liquids
- Maintain a good diet
- Avoid close contact with family members and wear a face mask or a clean handkerchief/cloth over nose and mouth at such occasions if possible
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water and specially after touching face
- Cough and sneeze into the elbow or into a handkerchief (this should either be disposed safely or washed with soap and water when wet)

Seek medical attention urgently if the symptoms get worse or develop any of the danger signs:

In Adults

- Difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Flu-like symptoms improving but then to return with fever and worse cough

In Children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Reduced urine output or no tears when crying
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improving but then to return with fever and worse cough)

Note: Those with the following conditions who are considered as at higher risk for complications of H1N1 Influenza should seek prompt medical attention if their symptoms worsen:

- Children younger than 2 years old
- Adults 65 years and older
- Pregnant women
- People with certain chronic medical or immunosuppressive conditions such as chronic lung (including asthma), cardiovascular (excluding hypertension), renal, hepatic, haematological (including sickle cell disease), metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus), immunosuppression, including that caused by medications or by HIV, those with disorders that can compromise respiratory function e.g spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders
- People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy

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