



MIDDLESEX COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Division of Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness

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FACT SHEET

Novel H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)

What is novel H1N1 flu?

- Novel H1N1 (known in the past as “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people.
- This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009.

What are the signs and symptoms of novel H1N1 flu in people?

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

Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting.

How does novel H1N1 virus spread?

- The virus is spread from person to person by coughing and/or sneezing.
- A person can also get the virus by touching something with flu virus on it and then touching their eyes, mouth, and/or nose.

Can I get novel H1N1 flu from eating or preparing pork?

No. You cannot get novel H1N1 flu from eating pork or pork products.

How long can an infected person spread the virus?

- Infected people may be able to infect others starting one (1) day before symptoms develop and up to seven (7) or more days after becoming sick.
- You may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

Can novel H1N1 flu be treated?

Yes. If you have flu symptoms, please visit your doctor for proper medication and treatment.

Is there a vaccine to prevent the novel H1N1 flu?

- No, but a vaccine is being prepared.
- You can find more information about novel H1N1 flu vaccine at www.flu.gov.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

- You can take the following steps to protect your health:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; germs spread this way.
 - Avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.

What should I do if I get sick?

- If you have fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, you should contact your doctor.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- Avoid contact with other people as much as possible.

Should I go to work if a family member at home is sick?

- Employees who are well but who have an ill family member at home with novel H1N1 flu can go to work as usual. These employees should monitor their health every day, and take precautions including: washing their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze.

What actions are the Middlesex County Public Health Department (MCPHD) taking?

- The MCPHD is working with the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS), local health departments, and other public health partners on disease surveillance, planning, and education.
- The Department has also increased influenza surveillance efforts with hospitals and health care providers.
- We will continue to provide information needed to protect the health of our residents.
- Facts about the current novel H1N1 flu event can be found on our website at:
<http://co.middlesex.nj.us/publichealth/hot-topics.asp>

Where can I find more information about the Novel H1N1 flu?

- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>
- NJDHSS: <http://www.state.nj.us/health/er/h1n1>
24-hour toll-free information line: 1-866-321-9571
- Info Line of Central Jersey: 1-888-908-INFO (4636)
- MCPHD Hotline: 732-745-4344

Information adapted from:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm>

United States Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.flu.gov/vaccine/vacresearch.html#campaign>