

Influenza Like Illness (ILI)

What is Influenza Like Illness (ILI)?

(H1N1 and Seasonal influenza)

Influenza is an acute viral illness of the respiratory tract characterized by fever, headache, muscle pains, weakness, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The cough is often severe and prolonged. The clinical severity of infection can range from asymptomatic illness to primary viral pneumonia and death. Acute symptoms generally last 2 - 4 days, although malaise and cough may continue 2 weeks longer. Influenza may be clinically indistinguishable from disease caused by other respiratory viruses, such as, the common cold.

Symptoms of Flu

Seasonal Flu	H1N1 (Swine) Flu
All types of flu can cause:	Same as seasonal flu, but symptoms may be more severe.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Coughing and/or sore throat• Runny or stuffy nose• Headaches and/or body aches• Chills• Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Coughing and/or sore throat• Runny or stuffy nose• Headaches and/or body aches• Chills• Fatigue
	In addition to the above symptoms, a number of H1N1 (swine) flu cases reported:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vomiting• Diarrhea

What should I do if I have symptoms of Influenza Like Illness (ILI)?

CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

What is H1N1?

2009 H1N1 (referred to as "swine flu" early on) is an influenza A virus causing respiratory illness people.

How is Influenza A spread?

By droplets when a person with the respiratory illness coughs or sneezes. By touching something with the flu virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

How is H1N1 treated?

There are medications your doctor may prescribe for treating both seasonal and 2009 H1N1 called antiviral drugs. These medications can make you better faster and may also prevent serious complications. This flu season, antiviral drugs are being used mainly to treat people who are very sick, such as people who need to be hospitalized, and to treat sick people who are more likely to get serious flu complications. Your health care provider will decide whether antiviral drugs are needed to treat your illness. Most people with 2009 H1N1 or seasonal flu have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs and the same is true of seasonal flu.

What precaution should I take in caring for my client?

All field professionals caring for a client should follow standard precautions with all client care. Observe respiratory precautions at all times when you or your client has symptoms of respiratory illness by wearing a surgical mask or N95 respirator.

My family member has been diagnosed with H1N1, Should I go to work?

If you do not have any of the symptoms of Influenza A you may go to work. Of course, use your best judgment, follow medical advice from your healthcare provider, do not substitute our recommendations for your own judgment or medical advice. We encourage our employees to stay home when they are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness. If a field professional has a fever >100° F [37.8°C] and one of the other symptoms of Influenza we do not want you to provide direct care to clients. AHC requires that all employees adhere to standard precautions, respiratory protection and contact precautions.

I have sore throat, I think I have the flu. Should I go to work?

If you have a febrile respiratory illness, meaning a temperature with one or more of the remaining symptoms of Influenza A, we instruct that you do not provide direct client care and that you notify the office immediately. You may return to work 24 hours after your fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medications.

My client has H1N1, I don't want to go to work and get infected or have my family infected, what should I do?

Field professional who are exposed to H1N1 are required to monitor and report signs of febrile respiratory illness. Field Professionals who do not have a febrile respiratory illness may continue to work observing personal respiratory protection (N95 respirator) and practice standard precautions.

I have influenza symptoms, should I see my doctor?

The Minnesota Department Health (MDH) recommends that a normally healthy adult with influenza like symptoms/febrile respiratory illness should stay home 24 hours after the fever is gone without fever reducing medication. A sick person should seek medical care right away for:

- difficulty breathing or chest pain
- 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
- has seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions)
- is less responsive than normal or becomes confused

Should I get the seasonal flu shot?

Accurate Home Care recommends that all field professionals get the seasonal flu vaccine. We encourage you to discuss all vaccinations with your healthcare provider as well as self educate about the vaccination, and signs and symptoms of the illness.

Should I get the H1N1 vaccine?

The Minnesota Department of Health has recommended that all healthcare workers be vaccinated against H1N1. Please check with you local public health on the anticipated distribution of the H1N1 vaccine.

What are standard precautions?

Standard precautions: Basic level of infection control that should be used in the care of all clients all of the time. Use standard precautions in caring for clients to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and non-recognized sources of infection. Standard precautions applies to blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat) whether or not they contain visible blood; non-intact skin; and mucous membranes.

Wear gloves: If hand contact with respiratory secretions or potentially contaminated surfaces is anticipated. Change gloves between cares and perform hand hygiene as discussed below.

Hand hygiene: Always, before and after any client contact and between client cares. Wash hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water - especially if visibly soiled. It is ok to clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly soiled.

Surgical masks: surgical masks have been recommended as part of universal precautions to protect the wearer from direct splashes and sprays of infectious secretions or body fluids.

Respirators: Respirator refers to N95 or any other NIOSH-certified filtering face piece. N95 respirators protect against small particle inhalation in disease transmission. The use of respirators to protect healthcare personnel from airborne influenza particles.

To test fit:

Cup both hands over the front of the respirator, being careful not to disturb its position. Exhale sharply. If leakage is suspected, adjust position of respirator and/or strap and repeat procedure.

Is it okay for Field Professionals to be working with a client if the client has been diagnosed with H1N1?

If a client has a respiratory illness our field professionals are instructed to use standard, contact precautions, droplet precautions and respiratory precautions when providing direct care to prevent transmission. If the field professional is immune compromised or for any reason feels at high risk of transmission of the virus, please notify the office immediately to address all concerns related to providing direct care to a client experiencing respiratory symptoms.

Is Accurate required to tell the client or responsible party if a field professional has been diagnosed with H1N1?

Field professional who have a febrile respiratory illness, meaning a temperature >100 degrees F with one or more of the remaining symptoms of Influenza A are instructed to not provide direct client care. They may return to work 24 hours after their fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medications.

A positive Rapid Influenza Diagnostic Test (RIDT) taken at the Doctor's office determines Influenza A is likely, but does not necessarily determine H1N1.

All employees of Accurate are directed to practice standard precautions including respiratory precautions while providing direct care to clients.

When are people contagious?

People are contagious with Influenza A one day prior to having symptoms and up to 7 days after symptoms began. Children may be contagious longer.

Who supplies personal protective equipment?

Accurate Home Care

Is there a special mask we can have out here at the home?

Yes, there are surgical masks available in the homes that have a file box. OSHA approved masks are available for field professional use when providing direct care to the clients.

How can I help prevent the spread of the virus?

- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label. An inexpensive disinfectant can be made with 1 part bleach to 10 parts water.
- Sheets, linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first.
- Wash linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using household laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting. Avoid "hugging" laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating yourself. Clean your hands with soap and water right after handling dirty laundry. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Frequent hand washing, when visibly soiled or when in doubt of their cleanliness by using soap and warm water, rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds washing all surfaces, dry well.
- Use of hand sanitizer by applying a dime size amount of hand rub gel to the palm of one hand, rub hands together covering all surfaces of hands until handrub is absorbed.
- Respiratory Etiquette - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue in the waste basket. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve.
- Stay home when you have a fever along with one of the other symptoms of influenza.

How long can influenza virus remain viable on objects (such as books and doorknobs)?

Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on the surface.

What kills influenza virus?

Influenza virus is destroyed by heat (167°F, 100°C). In addition, several chemical germicides, including chlorine, hydrogen peroxide, detergents (soap), iodophors (iodine-based antiseptics), and alcohols are effective against human influenza viruses if used in proper concentration for a sufficient length of time..

Can I get infected with 2009 H1N1 virus from eating or preparing pork?

H1N1 viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get infected with novel H1N1 virus from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

Where can I get the H1N1 vaccine?

Call your local public health for information regarding vaccination sites.

Those at highest risk of complications from the novel H1N1 influenza will be targeted to receive the vaccine first.

High-risk individuals include:

- Pregnant women.
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age.
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel.
- People between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old.
- People 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk for H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems