



Simple steps to protect yourself from Influenza A (H1N1) infection

Based on WHO recommendations



How do people become infected with influenza A(H1N1)?

Outbreaks in humans are now occurring from human-to-human transmission. When infected people cough or sneeze, infected droplets get on their hands, drop onto surfaces, or are dispersed into the air. Another person can breathe in contaminated air, or touch infected hands or surfaces, and be exposed.

To prevent spread, people should:

- cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing, and
- wash their hands regularly.

What are the signs and symptoms of infection?

Early signs of influenza A(H1N1) are flu-like, including fever, cough, headache, muscle and joint pain, sore throat and runny nose, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhoea.

How can I protect myself and prevent illness?

Practise general preventive measures for influenza to prevent infection:

- avoid close contact with people who appear unwell and have fever and cough;
- wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often;
- practise good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping physically active.
- **ask your union to work for the implementation of a prevention and response plan at your workplace. You can find a guide for your union at:**

<http://psihealthblog.typepad.com/files/5--what-the-union-can-do---preparing-the-workplace-for-pandemic-flu---lo-lit-version---final-11-08.doc>

What should I do if I think I have the illness?

If you feel unwell, have high fever, cough or sore throat:

- Stay at home and keep away from work, school or crowds.
- Rest and take plenty of fluids.
- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when coughing and sneezing, and dispose of the used tissues properly.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often and thoroughly, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Inform family and friends about your illness and try to avoid contact with other people.
- **Contact your union and ask them to ensure you will suffer no negative consequences for being absent.**

What should I do if I need medical attention?

- Contact your doctor or healthcare provider before travelling to a health facility, and report your symptoms. Explain why you think you have influenza A(H1N1) (if you have recently travelled to a country where there is an outbreak in humans). Follow the advice given to you.
- If it is not possible to contact your healthcare provider in advance, communicate your suspicion of infection as soon as you arrive at the facility.
- Cover your nose and mouth during travel.

WHO basic recommendations for individuals

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently_asked_questions/what/en/index.html

CDCs Basic Recommendations

http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/swineflu_you.htm

Slightly more comprehensive guide

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/printerfriendlynews.php?newsid=147797>

