

H1N1 flu virus: What to do if you have symptoms

Symptoms

H1N1 flu feels very much like the regular seasonal flu. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.

When you should seek medical care

Most cases of H1N1 flu tend to be mild. However, if you do not start to feel better after a few days or if your symptoms get worse, you should either call your health care provider or [Telehealth](#) at 1-866-797-0000.

You should call your health care provider immediately if you experience flu symptoms and you :

- are pregnant;
- have heart or lung disease;
- have any other chronic health problem that requires regular medical attention;
- live in a remote or isolated community;
- are elderly or frail; or
- have an illness or are receiving treatments – for example, for diabetes, cancer, or HIV/AIDS – that might affect your immune system.

What to do if your children are sick with flu

If your child is suffering from the flu, you should seek medical care immediately if his or her symptoms improve and then suddenly become worse. In addition, seek care if you notice any of the following signs :

- fast or difficult breathing;
- bluish or dark-coloured lips or skin;
- drowsiness to the point where he or she cannot be easily wakened;
- severe crankiness or not wanting to be held; or
- dehydration – not drinking enough fluids and not going to the bathroom regularly.

How to care for yourself

If you do get the flu, there are some things you can do to make yourself feel better and avoid spreading the virus to others. Stay home and get plenty of rest. Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, particularly after coughing or blowing your nose. To ease the symptoms of flu :

- drink lots of fluids;
- avoid drinks with caffeine;
- take basic pain or fever relievers;
- do not give acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or Aspirin®) to children or teenagers under the age of 16;
- apply heat for short periods of time using a hot water bottle or heating pad to reduce muscle pain;
- take a warm bath;
- gargle with a glass of warm water or suck on hard candy or lozenges;
- use saline drops or spray for a stuffy nose; and
- avoid alcohol and tobacco.

Reference: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ccom/flu/h1n1/public/care.aspx>

Important Website Links

Public Health Agency of Canada <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>
Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (Ontario) <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/>
Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/>
World Health Organization <http://who.int/>
Thunder Bay District Health Unit <http://www.tbdhu.com>