

H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) Information

(Updated: November 2009)

Find out where to get H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine in your [state](#).

Influenza, including H1N1 (swine flu), is a vaccine-preventable illness. Getting the flu vaccine is the best way to protect you and your family from flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) expects more H1N1 vaccine to be available each week. If you haven't been able to get the vaccine yet, it's important that you keep trying. H1N1 (swine flu) is widespread throughout most of the country now and could continue until spring.

Who should get vaccinated?

Because vaccine supply is limited now, people at highest risk of serious illness from the flu should have priority to receive the vaccine. The first people who should receive the H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine include:

- Children ages 6 months through 4 years
- Parents and caretakers of infants younger than 6 months
- Pregnant women
- Health care workers and emergency services personnel
- Children ages 6 months and older with chronic health conditions

As more vaccine supply is available, all children ages 6 months through 24 years of age, and adults ages 25 through 64 with chronic medical conditions, should also be vaccinated.

How many doses do children need?

Children ages 9 and younger (up to their 10th birthday) will need two doses of H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine to receive the most protection against the virus. Ideally, they should get the second dose four weeks after the first dose.

For the H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine given by injection, the 2nd dose may be given as early as 21 days after the first dose. For the nasal spray vaccine, it is best to wait at least 28 days between doses.

People ages 10 and older need one dose of H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine.

What are the kinds of flu vaccine?

Both the [nasal spray flu vaccine](#) and the [flu shot](#) are safe and effective. Parents can choose whichever form is available in their area, depending on the health and age of their child:

- Children ages 6 months through 2 years, pregnant women, and anyone with a chronic medical condition, must get the flu shot. These groups cannot get the nasal spray vaccine.
- Healthy people ages 2 through 49 years may receive the nasal spray vaccine.

It's also important to get seasonal flu vaccine, which is a separate vaccine from the H1N1 flu vaccine. The AAP recommends all children ages 6 months through 18 years receive seasonal flu vaccine every year.

[H1N1 Flu Vaccine—Why the Delay?](#) ~ Flu vaccine is the single best way to protect against influenza illness. Listen to a CDC podcast to understand how flu vaccines are made, why manufacturing and shipping vaccine take so long, and how you can find flu vaccines near you.

Tips on how to prevent the spread of germs

The flu (influenza) is spread by coughing, sneezing and unclean hands. The [CDC](#) encourages everyone to prevent the spread of germs by doing the following:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands
- Put used tissues in the trash right away.
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. Wash with soap and water, or with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school, and limit your contact with others to keep from infecting them. People should stay home at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100°F), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, In special circumstances your doctor might recommend a longer time..

How families can protect themselves from swine flu

Experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics answer questions about the swine flu. The following are links to news articles and interviews:

Paul Offit, MD, FAAP, dispels common myths about the H1N1 flu vaccine in an Oct. 11, 2009, article in the [New York Times](#) .

Henry Bernstein, MD, FAAP, member of the AAP Committee on Infectious Diseases, advises parents about H1N1 in a series of interviews on HealthRadio:

October 28, 2009

[Prepare Your Children For Flu Season](#)
[Latest Update on H1N1 Vaccine For Kids](#)

September 2009

[How Parents Can Protect Their Children from H1N1](#)
[Information About H1N1 Vaccine](#)
[How "Common" Are Colds and Flu](#)
[Treating Colds and Flu Without Drugs](#)

[Richard Besser, MD, FAAP, former acting director of the CDC](#) (recorded May 2009)

[Joseph Bocchini, MD, FAAP, chairman of the AAP Committee on Infectious Diseases](#) (recorded May 2009)

A note about antivirals

Most children will recover with rest and care at home. People in high-risk groups may need antiviral medicine. Antiviral medicine may help shorten the length of illness if taken soon after infection. If your child is in a high risk group [provide link to a list of high risk children] and you suspect your child has influenza, or if your child has more severe influenza symptoms, call your pediatrician.

Additional online resources

For Parents/Caregivers:

- AAP 2009 H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu) [handout](#) .
- [AAP Frequently Asked Questions and Answers for Parents and Caregivers About H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\)](#) (AAP)
- Vaccine Information Statements (VISs) are information sheets produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that explain to vaccine recipients, their parents, or their legal representatives both the benefits and

risks of a vaccine

- [2009 H1N1 Live attenuated influenza vaccine \(the nasal spray vaccine\)](#)
- [2009 H1N1 inactivated influenza vaccine \(the flu shot\)](#)
- [Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 Flu: For Parents Who Have Children or Adolescents With High-Risk Medical Conditions \(CDC\)](#)
- [CDC Recommendations for the Amount of Time Persons with Influenza-Like Illness Should be Away from Others \(CDC\)](#)
- [Key Facts About Swine Flu \(CDC\)](#)
- [Hand Washing \(CDC\)](#)
- [H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Resources for Pregnant Women \(CDC\)](#)
- [Novel H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\) and Feeding your Baby: What Parents Should Know \(CDC\)](#)
- [Considerations for Pregnant Women Who are More Likely to be Exposed to H1N1 \(Swine Flu\) Virus at work: Information for Women in Education, Child Care, and Health Care \(CDC\)](#)
- [H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\) and You \(CDC\)](#)
- [What to Do If You Get Flu-Like Symptoms \(CDC\)](#)
- [Advice for Parents on Talking to Children About H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\) Concerns \(CDC\)](#)
- The CDC will answer questions from the general public about swine flu 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Contact [CDC INFO](#) at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

For Child Care Programs and Schools:

- [H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Resources for K-12 Schools \(CDC\)](#)
- [H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Resources for Child Care and Early Childhood Programs \(CDC\)](#)
- [H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Resources for Colleges and Universities \(CDC\)](#)
- Excerpts from "Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide, Second Edition" (Copyright American Academy of Pediatrics 2009).
 - [Hand Hygiene \(AAP\)](#)
 - [Outbreaks, Epidemics, and Other Infectious Disease Emergencies \(AAP\)](#)
- [Stopping the Spread of Germs at Home, Work and School \(CDC\)](#)

Information about H1N1 flu (swine flu) in other Languages:

- [From the Office of Minority Health: Information on H1N1flu \(Swine Flu\) Multiple languages](#)
- [CDC Resources in other languages](#)
- [Spanish Information](#)