

# 2009 H1N1 INFLUENZA VACCINE-

Information provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and  
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## What is 2009 H1N1 influenza?

2009 H1N1 influenza (often called Swine Flu) is caused by a new strain of influenza virus. Like other flu viruses, it spreads from person to person through coughing, sneezing, and sometimes through touching objects contaminated with the virus.

Signs of 2009 H1N1 can include:

- *Fatigue Fever Sore Throat Muscle Aches Chills Coughing Sneezing*

Some people also have diarrhea and vomiting. Most people feel better within a week. But some people get pneumonia or other serious illnesses and may have to be hospitalized and some die from H1N1 Influenza.

## How is 2009 H1N1 different from regular (seasonal) flu?

Seasonal flu viruses change from year to year, but they are closely related to each other. People who have had flu infections in the past usually have some immunity to seasonal flu viruses. The 2009 H1N1 flu virus is a new virus strain. It is very different from seasonal flu virus. Most people have little no immunity to 2009 H1N1 flu.

## 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine

Vaccines are available to protect against 2009 H1N1 influenza. They are made just like seasonal vaccines, and are as safe and effective as seasonal vaccines. They will not prevent “influenza-like” illness caused by other viruses.

## There are two kinds of 2009 H1N1 Vaccines being produced.

- **A 2009 H1N1 Flu Shot** - an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given

with a needle. The flu shot is approved for use in people 6 months of age and older including healthy people, people with chronic medical conditions and pregnant women. The 2009 H1N1 flu shot is being made in the same way that the seasonal flu shot is made and is made by the same manufacturer. It contains the preservative **Thimerosal** to keep it free from germs. Some people are worried that Thimerosal might be linked to autism. In 2004 a group of experts at the Institute of Medicine reviewed many studies and found no association between Thimerosal and autism. Additional studies since then reached the same conclusion.

## The 2009 H1N1 nasal spray flu vaccine

a vaccine made with live, weakened viruses that do not cause the flu. The nasal spray is approved for healthy people 2 years to 49 years of age who are not pregnant. The 2009 H1N1 nasal spray vaccine is being made in the same way and by the same manufacturer as the seasonal nasal spray vaccine.

## Who should get influenza shots?

The following should get the vaccine first.

- *Pregnant women*
- *People who live with or care for infants younger than 6 months*
- *Healthcare and emergency medical personnel*
- *Anyone from 6 months to 24 years of age*
- *Anyone from 25 to 64 with chronic conditions or weakened immune systems*

Children 9 years of age should get **two doses** about a month apart. As more vaccine becomes available the remainder of the population should get it.

### Some people should not get the vaccine or should wait

You should **not** get the vaccine if you have a **severe (life-threatening) allergy to eggs or to any other substance in the vaccine.** If you are moderately or severely ill, you might be advised to wait until you recover before getting the vaccine. If you have a mild cold or other illness, there is usually **no need to wait.** Also tell the person giving you the vaccine if you ever had:

- *severe allergies*
- *a life-threatening allergic reaction after a dose of seasonal flu vaccine,*
- *Guillain-Barré syndrome (a severe paralytic illness also called GBS).*

### What are the risks from the 2009 H1N1 Vaccine?

A vaccine, like any medicine, could cause a serious problem, such as a severe allergic reaction. But the risk of any vaccine causing serious harm, or death, is extremely small. The risks from are expected to be similar to those from the seasonal flu vaccine

#### *Mild problems:*

Some children and adolescents 2 to 17 years of age have reported mild reactions, including

- runny nose, nasal congestion or cough
- fever headache and muscle aches
- wheezing
- abdominal pain or occasional vomiting or diarrhea

Some adults 18-49 years of age have reported

- runny nose or nasal congestion
- sore throat . cough, chills, tiredness,
- headache

#### *Severe Problems:*

- Life-threatening allergic reactions to vaccines are very rare. If they do occur, it is usually within a few minutes to a few hours.
- In 1976, an earlier type of inactivated swine flu vaccine was associated with cases of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS). Since then flu vaccines have not been linked to GBS

### What if there is a severe reaction?

*What should I look for ?* Any unusual condition, such as a high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a severe allergic reaction can include difficult breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness  
*What should I do?* Call a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.

- Tell the doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given
- Ask your provider to report the reaction by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. Or you can file this report through the VAERS website [Http://www.vaers-hhs.gov](http://www.vaers-hhs.gov), or by calling 1-800-822-7967

### How can I learn more?

Where can I get the H1N1 Flu Vaccine?

As H1N1 flu vaccine becomes available our schools, some physicians and community flu clinics will be offering the H1N1 Flu Vaccine

- Ask your provider if they will be giving the H1N1 Flu Vaccine. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): - Call 1-800-232-4636 (I-800-CDC-INFO) or - Visit CDC'S website at [Http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) or [Http://www-cdc.gov/flu](http://www-cdc.gov/flu)
- Visit the web at [Http://www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).
- The Monmouth County Regional Health Commission for a list of upcoming community flu clinics at [www.mcrhc.org](http://www.mcrhc.org) or call at 732-493-9520

