

# H1N1 (Swine) Flu: Information for Employees



## What H1N1 swine flu?

Swine Flu or H1N1 Flu is a new type of flu virus that has started to make people sick in the United States and around the world. The symptoms of swine or H1N1 flu are much like the regular seasonal flu that causes illness in winter, including fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, runny nose, and tiredness. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea too.

## How does swine flu spread?

Swine flu is contagious. It spreads from person-to-person, just like regular seasonal flu. Flu virus spreads when a sick person coughs or sneezes near another person. The respiratory droplets that are created may contact a susceptible individual if he or she is within 6 feet of the coughing/sneezing person. Flu viruses may also be spread by contact with an environmental surface that has been recently contaminated by contact with a sick person. A person with the flu can spread germs from 1 day before to 7 days after getting sick.

## How can I help prevent transmitting or catching swine flu at work?

These good health habits will help keep germs like the flu out of the workplace:

- **Wash your hands often.** Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash every time you eat, handle food, use the bathroom, cough or sneeze onto your hand, change a diaper, and when your hands look dirty.
- **Cover your cough.** When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with your arm or sleeve, or with a tissue. If you use a tissue, throw it away, then wash your hands.
- **Stay home when you are sick.** If you are sick, stay home from work, school and running errands. Avoid close contact with others. You will keep others from catching your illness.
- **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- **What about the flu shot? Will that protect me from swine flu?**  
This year's flu shot will not protect you from the current swine flu. However, a new vaccine is being developed and may be available in the fall. If you are at risk from influenza, you should get the flu shot every year to protect against regular flu, regardless of whether swine flu is circulating in the community.

For more information, go to: [www.phila.gov/health](http://www.phila.gov/health)