

# What **PARENTS** Need to Know about Flu



## Signs & Symptoms of Flu:

1. Sudden onset of symptoms
2. Fever over 100° F in adults, and as high as 103° to 105° F in children
3. Chills and sweats
4. Headache
5. Dry cough; can become severe
6. Muscle/joint aches and pains
7. Fatigue and weakness
8. Loss of appetite
9. Diarrhea and vomiting in children

### About Seasonal Flu

- Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses; H1N1 is also called “Swine” flu.
- Flu spreads from person to person (cough, sneeze, runny nose).
- In the US, 5% to 20% of the population gets seasonal flu.
- About 36,000 people die annually from flu-related causes in the US.
- H1N1 has caused greater disease burden in people **younger than 25 years of age** than in older people.
- People with certain chronic conditions may be at high risk for serious flu complications and should consult their physician.
- Those infected and contagious can infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after, possibly longer in children and people with weakened immune systems.



### About H1N1 Flu

- New contagious virus causing illness; also called “Swine Flu”.
- Spreads from person to person (cough, sneeze, runny nose) through droplets or contaminated surfaces.
- Has caused greater disease burden in people younger than 25 years of age than in older people.
- Can infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. Possibly longer in children and people with weakened immune systems.
- Can be very serious, especially for younger children and children of any age who have one or more chronic medical conditions.
- Call a doctor right away if your child of any age has:
  - Fast breathing or trouble breathing
  - Bluish or gray skin color
  - Not drinking enough fluids
  - Severe or persistent vomiting
  - Not waking up or not interacting
  - Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
  - Symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
  - Has other conditions and develops flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough.

### PREVENTION IS KEY!

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after use.
- Wash your hands often for 15-30 seconds with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If your child is sick with flu-like illness, it is recommended that you keep them home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone, except to get medical care or other necessities. Keep your child away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.
- Flu shots can be given to children 6 months and older.
- A nasal-spray vaccine can be given to healthy children 2 years and older.
- Get a flu vaccine for yourself, too!
- Keep surfaces and toys clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant per instructions on the label.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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WWW.RICHLANDHEALTH.ORG \* 1-800-CDC-INFO