

## Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 COMMON QUESTIONS

- **What is Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza?**
  - A respiratory virus that can spread from person-to-person when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. People can also become infected by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes before washing their hands.
- **What can I do to protect myself and my family from Pandemic (H1N1) influenza?**
  - Hand washing with soap and warm water is one of the most effective ways to stop the spread of infection. Or, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash hands:
    - before touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
    - before you eat or serve food
    - before you brush your teeth
    - after you are near a person with influenza
    - after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose
  - Plan to get immunized.
- **If I am sick how can I help stop the spread of infection?**
  - Cover your coughs and sneezes with your arm, not your hand.
  - Wash hands frequently with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Stay home and call your health provider or *Health Link Alberta* for advice toll-free 1-866-408-5465 or go online to [healthlinkalberta.ca](http://healthlinkalberta.ca)
- **What are the symptoms of Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza?**

As with seasonal influenza, the symptoms include fever, tiredness, coughing, and sore throat. Some people with Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza have also reported vomiting and diarrhea. Most people recover from influenza in about a week.
- **What should I do if I have the symptoms of Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza?**
  - Stay home and rest.
  - Avoid contact with other people.
  - If your symptoms are getting worse or you are not recovering, call Health Link Alberta 1-866-408-LINK (5465) for advice or your doctor for an appointment.
  - If your symptoms become severe, go to an emergency centre right away.
  - Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza can lead to complications for some people, especially young children, pregnant women and people who have health problems. Pregnant women should speak to a medical professional if they develop influenza symptoms, and seek immediate medical care if the symptoms worsen.

## Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 QUICK FACTS

- **Why is it important to get immunized against influenza?**

Immunization is our best defence against becoming ill and also helps prevent spread of influenza to others, especially people at risk of complications. It will be very important for people to get two immunizations: one to protect against Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza **and** one to protect against seasonal influenza.
- **Where are immunizations available?**

Alberta Health Services will offer free seasonal influenza and Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 immunizations to all eligible Albertans at various locations across the province beginning in fall 2009. Location details will be announced when finalized.
- **Where can I get more information or advice about influenza?**
  - [www.healthlinkalberta.ca](http://www.healthlinkalberta.ca)
  - [www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/influenza-self-care.html](http://www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/influenza-self-care.html)
  - Call Health Link Alberta toll-free: 1-866-408-5465
  - [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca)
- **We're prepared**

The Government of Alberta has been preparing the health system and the province for an influenza pandemic since 1999. *Alberta's Plan for Pandemic Influenza* will direct activities of the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health Services and other key groups to ensure a coordinated response to pandemic influenza.
- **More Information**

Alberta Health and Wellness is collaborating with Alberta Health Services, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and other provinces and territories to coordinate its response to Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza. For more information visit:

**Alberta Health and Wellness:**  
[www.health.alberta.ca](http://www.health.alberta.ca)

**Alberta Health Services:**  
[www.albertahealthservices.ca](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca)

**Public Health Agency of Canada:**  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)