

Flu Information

What is the flu? The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by influenza viruses. There are many different types (strains) of flu viruses. Novel H1N1 flu is a new and very different influenza virus that is spreading among people. This new virus was called "swine flu" at first because it has pieces of flu viruses found in pigs in the past. However, H1N1 virus has not been detected in U.S. pigs.

How serious is the flu? The flu can be very serious, especially for younger children or those who have one or more chronic medical conditions and pregnant women. These conditions include asthma or other lung problems, diabetes, weakened immune systems, kidney disease, heart problems and neurological and neuromuscular disorders.

How does flu spread? Both H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with influenza. People also may get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of seasonal and H1N1 flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea.

How long can a sick person spread the flu to others?

People infected with the flu may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and in people infected with H1N1 flu.

Feeling Flu?

Our urgent care centers have skilled family physicians and nurses, available without an appointment.

Family Health Plaza

1216 Camellia Blvd. • Lafayette • 769-0069

Family Health Plaza-South

2810 Bonin Rd. • Youngsville • 857-5765

QuickCare

3554 W. Pinhook Rd. • Lafayette • 837-7116

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Flu testing and treatment
Flu immunizations, including the FluMist™
Please call ahead to verify insurance coverage.**



A Guide for Parents



Seasonal and H1N1 Flu



**Lafayette General
Medical Center**

Your Health. Your Hospital. Your Choice.

Protect Your Child

How can I protect my child against flu?

Get a seasonal flu vaccine for yourself and your child to protect against seasonal flu viruses.



Take everyday steps to prevent the spread of all flu viruses. This includes:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Teach your child to take these actions too.
- Try to keep your child from having close contact (about 6 feet) with sick people, including anyone in the household who is sick.
- Keep surfaces like bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children



clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by sick persons in your household in the trash.

(Though the scientific evidence is not as extensive as that on hand washing and alcohol-based sanitizers, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful for killing flu germs on hands in settings where alcohol-based products are prohibited.)

Is there a vaccine to protect my child from H1N1 flu? A vaccine against H1N1 flu is being produced and will be available in the coming months. A vaccine against seasonal flu is available each fall and

winter. More information about the new, two-dose H1N1 flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine is available on the CDC Web site, www.flu.gov.

Is there medicine to treat the flu? Antiviral drugs can treat both seasonal flu and the new H1N1 flu. These drugs can make people feel better and get better sooner. But they need to be prescribed by a doctor and they work best when started during the first two days of illness. These drugs can be given to children. The priority use for these drugs is to treat people who are seriously ill or who have a medical condition that puts them at high risk of serious flu complications.

If Your Child is Sick

What can I do if my child gets sick?

First, keep your child at home to rest and avoid spreading the flu. If your child is 5 years or older and otherwise healthy and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids. If your child is younger than 5, or of any age, and has a medical condition like asthma, diabetes, or a neurologic problem and develops flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, call your doctor or get medical attention. This is because younger children and children who have chronic medical conditions (like asthma or diabetes) may be at higher risk of serious complications from influenza infection, including the new H1N1. Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness.

What if my child seems very sick? Even children who have always been healthy before or had the flu before can get a severe case of flu.

Call or take your child to 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
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough.

When can my child go back to school after having the flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (Their fever should be gone without them having taken a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F or 37.8°C.