



What to Do If You Think Your Child May Have H1N1 (also called “swine flu”)

First and foremost, remain calm. The symptoms of H1N1 flu are very similar to those of regular seasonal flu – most commonly fever and cough. Very few people in the U.S. are hospitalized for H1N1 flu.

Know the Symptoms

H1N1 flu symptoms include:

- Fever, chills
- Aching muscles
- Headache
- General ill feeling
- Stuffy nose
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Vomiting or diarrhea

KNOW THIS FIRST

- CHOP providers – at the Hospital and at our network locations - **will not routinely test** children for H1N1 flu unless they are going to be hospitalized.
- CHOP providers will **not generally give antiviral medication** unless a child is hospitalized or has a serious high-risk medical condition such as heart disease. There is no proof that taking antiviral medicines will cure H1N1 flu.
- CHOP providers **will not give antibiotics**. They are not helpful in treating flu. In general, the flu simply has to run its course.
- CHOP providers **will only treat severe illness** that is a result of flu symptoms – such as dehydration from diarrhea or vomiting.

Know when to contact your pediatrician or primary care provider

Call if your child has:

- an earache or ear discharge
- wheezing
- a fever for more than 3 days, or fever that goes away for a while and returns
- symptoms that are getting worse

Also call your provider if your child has an underlying condition, such as heart, lung or kidney disease, or a compromised immune system.

Know when NOT to get emergency care

Most children with H1N1 flu will NOT require emergency care.

- Fever, cough, and congestion are usual flu symptoms and do NOT require emergency care. It can be frustrating to wait for a very long time in a busy emergency room, only to be told that your child won't be tested or treated.
- You do NOT need to come to the emergency room to get a note to return to school. You simply need to keep your child out of school for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone.

Know when you should get emergency care

There ARE some instances when you should go to the emergency room or call 911:

- Your child has difficulty breathing (breathing too hard or fast, or making grunting noises or wheezing)
- Your child is dehydrated: difficult to awaken, no urination in past 8 hours, dry mouth and lips

Know about at-home treatment

You can help your child feel more comfortable during the flu by taking these steps:

- You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol,[®] etc.) or ibuprofen (Advil,[®] Motrin,[®]) for fever or aches and pains. Follow the directions on the bottle.
- **DO NOT GIVE ASPIRIN.**
- If your child has a stuffy nose, use a cool mist vaporizer or salt water nose drops with bulb suctioning.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids.
- If your child has a sore throat, soft foods such as ice cream, pudding, or mashed potatoes will be easier to swallow.
- Most over-the-counter cold medications are not helpful and actually may be dangerous for some children. Please discuss any medications with your doctor or nurse practitioner.

Know about going back to school

You can help your child get better faster and prevent the spread of H1N1 flu by taking these steps:

- Keep your child home from school for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone.
- Limit your child's contact with other people while s/he has the flu.

Visit chop.edu or call **1-877-480-CHOP (2467)** for the most up-to-date information.

approved 9/22/09