

# 2009 Influenza Update

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# Influenza Update

- Influenza Facts
- Influenza Disease
- Protection, Treatment and Medical Care
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- Resources

# Seasonal Influenza Facts

- Influenza can be a serious viral illness, but even a mild infection can keep you from work, school, and other activities.
- Average of more than 200,000 people in the United States are hospitalized each year due to influenza complications.
- An estimated 36,000 people die of seasonal influenza-related causes in the United States.
- Seasonal influenza significantly impacts children under 5 years of age, elderly 65+ years, pregnant women, and those with serious medical conditions.



# H1N1 Influenza Facts

- This new virus was first detected in the United States in April 2009.
- Utah's first case was confirmed on May 2, 2009 in Summit county.
- On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared the 2009 H1N1 flu outbreak a pandemic.
- It is spread from person-to-person worldwide in the same way that seasonal influenza viruses spread.
- Illness with 2009 H1N1 virus has ranged from mild to severe. Most people who have been hospitalized with the 2009 H1N1 virus have had 1 or more medical conditions, including pregnancy, diabetes, heart disease, asthma and kidney disease.
- Young children and pregnant women are significantly impacted and unlike seasonal influenza, people 65 years and over are the least likely to be infected with the H1N1 virus.

# Influenza in Utah

- Influenza outbreaks can happen as early as October. Most of the time influenza activity peaks in January or later.
- For the past 2 seasons in Utah, influenza peaked around the end of February.
- Utah reported 504 influenza-associated hospitalizations and 1 pediatric death during the 2008 seasonal influenza season.
- Most influenza-associated hospitalizations occurred in children less than 5 years old and with known risk factors for severe disease or influenza-related complications.
- Utah reported over 300 cases of H1N1 influenza with 18 deaths during the 2009 spring H1N1 outbreak.



# Influenza - Disease

- Spreads from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes.
- Spreads when a person touches contaminated objects and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.
- The influenza virus may survive on environmental surfaces and infect a person for 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on the surface.



## Top Five Hot Spots for Germs



## Influenza - Incubation

- Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5 to 7 days **after** becoming sick.
- Children may pass the virus for longer than 7 days.
- You may be able to pass on the influenza to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.



## Influenza - Symptoms

- Influenza usually comes on suddenly (1-2 days), may last up to 5 days and include these symptoms:
- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are more common in children than adults.



## Seasonal Influenza - Protection Step 1: Vaccination

- Vaccination reduces your risk of becoming ill and spreading it to others.
- The seasonal influenza vaccine protects against the 3 most common strains of influenza viruses that are currently circulating.
- There are two vaccine types: live-virus nasal spray and the inactivated injectable (shot).
- Yearly vaccination is especially important for people at high risk of serious influenza complications:
  - Young children
  - Pregnant women
  - Health care workers
  - People with serious health conditions
  - People 65 years and older



## H1N1 Influenza - Protection Step 1: Vaccination

- The H1N1 vaccine is made the same way the seasonal influenza vaccine is made. It is just a different virus strain.
- There are 2 vaccine types: weakened live-virus nasal spray and injectable (shot).
- Children under 10 years of age need 2 doses separated by 1 month. Older children and adults need only 1 dose.
- The nasal spray vaccine can only be given to healthy people 2 to 49 years of age who are not pregnant.
- The two live-virus nasal spray vaccines for seasonal and H1N1 influenza must be separated by 21-28 days.
- The preservative, thimerosal, has not been shown to be harmful to pregnant women or to the developing fetus.
- Limited supplies of preservative-free vaccines will be available.

## H1N1 Vaccine Priority Groups

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or provide care for infants younger than 6 months (e.g., parents, siblings, and day care providers)
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel
- People 6 months through 24 years
- People 25 years through 64 years who have certain medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications.

## Utah H1N1 Vaccine Distribution

- Routine shipments will come throughout the season and supplies are limited.
- Vaccine is delivered directly to Utah's 12 local public health departments (LHDs) from the central distribution center.
- LHDs are targeting groups who will benefit the most from vaccination.
- Priority groups eligible to receive the H1N1 vaccine vary by health district.
- Vaccination plans vary by health district. Some will utilize other community providers, such as pharmacies, schools and hospitals.
- Vaccination will open up to others such as those 65+ years of age after priority groups are vaccinated.



## Influenza - Protection Step 2: Preventive Actions



## Influenza - Protection Step 2: Preventive Actions

- Cover your nose and mouth with a when you cough or sneeze or cough into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Face masks or respirators generally are not recommended for home and community use.
- If you are sick with influenza-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without a fever-reducing medicine.
- This does not apply to healthcare workers.
- Follow public health advice regarding school or business closures and avoiding crowds to lessen the spread of disease.

## Influenza - Protection Step 3: Treatment

- Take antiviral drugs if your health care provider recommends them.
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious complications.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- During the H1N1 pandemic, antiviral medicines are primarily recommended for people at high risk for serious illness.



## When to Seek Medical Care

- Most people with the influenza who are generally in good health will recover without needing to visit a health care provider.
- Contact primary health care provider first:
  - High risk people who are ill
  - People with more severe influenza symptoms
- Seek urgent or emergency care if you have *severe illness or can't reach your health care provider*.
- Take sanitary precautions while in the waiting room to avoid exposing others.
- The best time to call your health care provider or seek urgent or emergency care is first thing in the morning.



## Preserving the Health Care System

- Seek care in the appropriate places for appropriate reasons. For example, call your physician's office first. Don't just show up if you are unsure whether a visit is necessary.
- Make sure you have a primary care physician that you can call if you become ill, rather than immediately going to the emergency department.
- Avoid having more than one support person with a patient in a health care setting and avoid "tagalongs" under 12 years of age in physician offices, hospitals, etc.
- Avoid visiting the maternity ward at hospitals. This will prevent spreading germs and illness to newborn children and mothers who are more likely to get seriously ill.
- Get vaccinated if you are a health care worker and stay home from work if you have flu-like illness.
- Postpone elective procedures to avoid overcrowding and overextending hospitals and facilities. Hospital staffs may also divert patients to other hospitals.

## Community Mitigation

- Isolation
- Quarantine
- Community Social Distancing
- Workplace Social Distancing
- School Dismissal/Closures

## Isolation

- People with influenza should remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever without use of fever-reducing medications.
- Change from previous recommendation of "7 days after illness onset or until 24 hours after resolution of symptoms, whichever is longer."
- Most people in the spring had fever for 2-4 days.
- Does not apply to healthcare workers.



## Quarantine

- Applies to exposed people who are not ill.
- Separates those who may become infectious from healthy people.
- Recommended for 7 days after illness onset in household members.
- Quarantine of household contacts of ill persons is not recommended at this time.
- Household contacts should monitor their health daily, and practice good hygiene, including hand washing and respirator use, if appropriate.
- If they become ill, they should stay home.



## Community Social Distancing

- Used to decrease the frequency of contact between people.
- Cancels or modifies large public gatherings and limits congregation of people in public places.
- Closure of public places and cancellation of public gatherings are not anticipated for the 2009-2010 influenza season.
- Some organizations may choose to modify customs or practices, as they would in a typical influenza season.



## Workplace Social Distancing

- Used to limit exposure to influenza while keeping workplaces open for business.
- Utilize telecommuting, teleconferencing, staggered shifts or reassign workers to duties with less person to person contact.
- Advise ill workers to stay home, send home workers that become ill during the day.
- Allow flexible leave policies:
  - Ill workers
  - Caretakers
- Do not require doctor's note for validation of illness or return to work.
- Recommendations may change if severity of illness changes.

## School Dismissal

- To prevent transmission in the community at large.
- Period of dismissal varies by severity of pandemic, up to 12 weeks.
- Selective school dismissal:
  - School where many or all students are high risk
  - Excessive absenteeism
- Recommendations may change if severity of illness changes.



## Questions



## Resources

**Utah Flu Vaccine Locator:**

- <http://www.immunize-utah.org>

**Seasonal Influenza:**

- <http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/flu/index.htm>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

**H1N1 Influenza:**

- <http://health.utah.gov/epi/h1n1flu/>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>
- <http://www.flu.gov>

**Pandemic Planning:**

- <http://www.pandemicflu.utah.gov/>
- <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>

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