

WAYS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FLU

H1N1 spreads in the same way that other flu viruses do — through the air when someone who has the virus sneezes, coughs, or speaks. People also can catch the virus after touching a contaminated surface of an object that someone with the virus touched, sneezed, or coughed on. These five tips will help you prevent the spread of flu in your home.

1. Sanitize common items and areas. Germs can survive on tabletops, kitchen counters, toys, and doorknobs for up to 8 hours after being deposited there, so it's important to use a household disinfectant to keep these areas throughout the day.

2. Don't share linens, dishes and eating utensils between sick and healthy persons. Kitchen items should be washed by hand with soap and water or in the dishwasher with detergent. Wash linens with laundry soap and tumble dry on "hot" — and try to limit touching the laundry prior to washing it (for instance, carry it to the washer in a basket, not in your arms).

3. Get family members vaccinated. People can avoid catching the flu by getting vaccinated against the seasonal flu now and against the H1N1 flu when that vaccine becomes available. Click [HERE](#) for a list of flu shot providers near you. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) specifically recommends the H1N1 flu vaccine for:

- pregnant women
- people who live with (or care for) kids younger than 6 months old
- children and young adults between the ages of 6 months and 24 years
- people ages 25 to 64 with chronic health conditions or compromised immune systems
- health care and emergency services personnel

4. Keep infected persons away from others. Have kids with the flu stay in a separate room away from common areas and, if possible, use a separate bathroom that they don't share with other family members. If possible, have only one adult care for a sick child. Limit close, face-to-face contact with family members as much as possible, especially those who are at risk of catching the flu or having complications from it (like other kids, those with chronic illnesses, and pregnant women).

At-risk individuals should maintain a distance of 6 feet when around anyone with H1N1 flu, and — if at all possible — they should not be the primary caretakers of someone with H1N1 flu. If you're a caretaker and are pregnant or have a chronic condition, wear a facemask when caring for your child and wash your hands frequently.

Kids with H1N1 flu who can tolerate wearing a facemask should wear it when in common areas of the house or when leaving the house for medical care or other necessities.

5. Teach family members to avoid contact with germs. Encourage those in your household to:

- cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, and put used tissues in the trash
- cough or sneeze into an upper arm sleeve (not their hands) if a tissue is not available
- clean hands after coughing or sneezing — wash with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner
- avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth

WHEN TO VISIT THE ER

Having symptoms of the H1N1 or seasonal flu is **NOT** a reason to go to the ER. If your child has flu-like symptoms, parents should consult their primary care provider for treatment advice.

However, if your child is in **medical distress**, immediate medical care is needed. Go to the ER or dial 911 if your child:

- develops a fever of 105 degrees or more
- develops fast breathing or has trouble breathing
- has blue and gray skin color
- develops severe or persistent vomiting
- will not wake up or interact
- is so irritable that he does not want to be held
- is not drinking enough fluids (infants should have a wet diaper every 8 hours or less, older children should urinate every 12 hours or less)
- or if the flu symptoms improve but then return with fever and a worse cough.