

# H1N1 Flu

## What is H1N1 Flu?

Known as 'Swine Flu', H1N1 flu is a respiratory disease caused by the type A influenza virus. Seasonal influenza outbreaks by type A influenza (H1 or H3) are relatively common. However, the current H1N1 influenza is genetically 'new' and humans have not been exposed nor developed immunity against it. The initial outbreak in Mexico has been a serious infection causing significant illness with a high death rate. After further transmission to the USA and other countries, the virus is causing less complications and one death to date. As any other type of Influenza, H1N1 may cause serious respiratory complications, or exacerbation of a previous chronic illness such as asthma, lung disease and heart disease.

## Clinical features of Flu

Fever, cough, sore throat, headache, lethargy, lack of appetite, body-aches, chills and fatigue. Some people with Influenza also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

## Mode of transmission

H1N1 virus is transmitted from person to person by 'droplet transmission' i.e. through coughing, sneezing or through direct contact.

H1N1 influenza viruses are not transmitted by food. Eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products is safe. Cooking pork to an internal temperature of 160°F (71.1°C) kills the swine flu virus as it does other bacteria and viruses.

## Management

H1N1 Influenza is managed in the same manner as all other forms of Influenza. It appears that this type of Influenza is sensitive to the two known anti-viral agents, Oseltamivir or Zanamivir, however the virus continues to mutate and resistance may develop.

The current seasonal Influenza vaccination, although not specific against this type of H1N1 virus, remains indicated to all persons at risk. The vaccination reduces the likelihood of patients 'mixing' with patients with the serious form of H1N1; it avoids complications in at risk individuals and reduces the chance of Influenza spreading in the community.



41 Mount Kellett Road, The Peak, Hong Kong  
Main line: 2849 0111 Website: www.matilda.org



MATILDA MEDICAL CENTRE  
明德醫療中心

Suite 2601, 9 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong  
Tel: 2537 8500 mmc.central@matilda.org

## The following is a message (29/04/2009) from the Centre for Health Protection in Hong Kong:

*'People who have returned from the affected places should wear a surgical mask for seven days'*

*'If they present with fever, cough, sore throat or have difficulty breathing, they should seek medical attention immediately. They should also inform their doctors about their travel history.'*

*'People should not travel when they are sick and should limit contact with others to prevent the possible spread of infectious diseases,'*

## Infection Control

- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly. Alcohol-based hand rub is also effective when hands are not visibly soiled;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth;
- Wash hands with liquid soap promptly if they are contaminated by respiratory tract secretions, e.g. after sneezing or coughing;
- Cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharges properly;
- Always wrap nasal and mouth discharges with tissue paper, and dispose of the tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Wear a surgical mask when symptoms of respiratory tract infection or fever develop. Seek medical advice promptly;
- Refrain from going to work or school if you develop symptoms of influenza.

A daily update on H1N1 Influenza in humans is now available on the CHP website ([www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk)).

### Matilda International Hospital Out Patient Department

Tel: 2849 1500/2849 1515  
Email: [opd@matilda.org](mailto:opd@matilda.org)  
Office Hours: 8:00am-10:00pm  
(Mon-Sun)  
\* By appointment only

### Matilda Medical Centre

Tel: 2537 8500  
Email: [mmc.central@matilda.org](mailto:mmc.central@matilda.org)  
Office Hours: 8:30am-6:00pm (Mon-Fri)  
8.30am-1:00pm (Sat)  
\* By appointment only