



H1N1 Facts

(As of October 1, 2009)

There are two types of flu viruses (and their respective vaccines) that must be considered in the upcoming fall/winter flu season: “H1N1 Flu,” and the annually recurring “Seasonal Flu.” Separate vaccinations are being manufactured for each virus. At this time, Texas MedClinic will only be administering Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for its on-site program this year. However, check our website (www.texasmedclinic.com) for updates as the season progresses. The following is a brief summary of the H1N1 (also called “Swine”) flu.

There has been no shortage of news about the H1N1 influenza virus since it made a dramatic entry into the U.S. via San Antonio last spring. Texas MedClinic has a task force focused on staying up-to-date as things unfold regarding vaccinations, diagnosis and treatment of this virus. The purpose of this newsletter is to make up-to-date information about the H1N1 flu virus available to employers that can be distributed within each company. An electronic copy of this document can also be found at our website.

General

- The H1N1 virus has thus far been mild. Deaths have remained low (302 deaths out of 43,771 confirmed cases).
- In a typical year there are 36,000 deaths due to the seasonal flu.
- It is anticipated that a second wave of H1N1 influenza will occur this fall.

Vaccination

- A vaccine against H1N1 should be available mid-October, 2009.
- The H1N1 vaccine will require only one dose.
- The seasonal and H1N1 Flu vaccines cannot be combined into one shot.
- Initially, the vaccine will only be available for those considered to be high risk. (See CDC website for high risk categories).

Symptoms of H1N1 Flu

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms are indistinguishable from the Seasonal Flu.

They include:

- Fever, plus at least either a cough or sore throat

Other symptoms may include:

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| • Headaches | • Chills |
| • Tiredness | • Diarrhea |
| • Runny or stuffy nose | • Vomiting |
| • Body aches | |

Diagnosis

- Rapid flu testing is available to help determine the **TYPE** of influenza only (Type A or B).
- Specific testing for H1N1 is cost prohibitive in the office setting except in rare circumstances.
- Only state labs and military bases routinely identify the H1N1 subtype.
- Specific testing for H1N1 does **NOT** assist with the diagnosis or management since results take one week.
- During last April’s outbreak of H1N1, many patients and employers were demanding rapid tests to “exclude” flu.
- These tests are not necessary, and in many cases are not accurate.
- Decisions about testing should be left to the treating physician, who will follow public health guidelines.

Treatment

- Antiviral medications are available to treat H1N1 influenza, once a diagnosis is made.
- The CDC’s recommendations are that only those at high risk of complications should be treated with antiviral medications.
- Healthy children and adults without underlying medical problems do not need medication for H1N1.
- The vast majority (>99%) of individuals who contract H1N1 will recover without consequence.