

## Facemask and Respirator Use:

The use of facemasks and respirators is generally not recommended in community and home settings. While facemasks help stop droplets from being spread by the person wearing them, they are not designed to protect against breathing in very small particle aerosols that may contain viruses.

### Non - Sick Persons: Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use When Novel H1N1 is in the Community

Setting	Non-High Risk People	High-Risk People*
In the Community:		
Not a crowded setting	Not Recommended	Not Recommended
Crowded setting	Not Recommended	Avoid the setting. If unavoidable, consider use.
At Home:		
Caregiver to person with influenza-like symptoms	Not Recommended	Avoid being caregiver. If unavoidable, consider use.
Other members in the home	Not Recommended	Not Recommended
At Work:		
Non-Health Care	Not recommended	Not recommended
Health Care - caring for persons with known, probable or suspected novel H1N1 or influenza-like illness	Respirator	Respirator. Consider temporary reassignment

### Sick Persons with Confirmed, Probable, or Suspected Novel Influenza A (H1N1): Interim Recommendations for Facemask Use

Setting	Recommendation
Home	Facemask if available and tolerable. If not, use tissue to cover cough/sneeze.
Health care when outside of patient room	Facemask, if tolerable.
In the Community— <b>only</b> if you <b>must</b> be out	Facemask if available and tolerable. If not, use tissue to cover cough/sneeze.
Breastfeeding	Facemask if available and tolerable. If not, use tissue to cover cough/sneeze.

\* High-Risk Factors: pregnancy, chronic medical conditions (asthma, diabetes, heart disease), over 65 years, and young children.

# Pandemic Influenza

## Reducing Workplace Risk



The health of employees during an outbreak such as novel H1N1 influenza plays a critical role in the continued operations of a business.

This brochure is designed to educate employers and employees about appropriate precautions to minimize the risk of potential employee exposure, illness, and the spread of pandemic influenza in the workplace.

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## Severity of novel H1N1 flu:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is still learning about the severity of novel H1N1 flu virus. Currently, there is not enough information to predict how severe the outbreak will be in terms of illness and death or how it will compare with seasonal flu.

Certain groups might be more likely to develop a severe illness from novel H1N1 flu, such as pregnant women and persons with chronic medical conditions.

## H1N1 Flu symptoms have been similar to seasonal flu:

- fever
- cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- body aches
- headaches
- chills and fatigue

Infected people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting.

## If employees get influenza-like symptoms:

- **Stay home at least 24 hours after fever (100°F) is gone. (Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)** You should not leave your home except to seek medical care as necessary. Call your medical provider before going to the office.
- **Healthcare personnel should be excluded from work for 7 days or until symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.**
- As of June 25, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that workers exposed to a person with pandemic influenza A (H1N1) may continue to go to work unless he/she becomes ill.
- Employees who are well but have an ill family member can go to work as usual. They should monitor their health every day and if they become ill, notify their supervisor and stay home.
- Employees who are well but have an underlying health condition should call their health care provider for advice.

## Novel H1N1 virus is thought to spread the same way as seasonal flu:

- From person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza.
- Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.
- Individuals may be contagious from one day before developing symptoms to up to 7 days after they get sick.

## Steps employers can take:

- Plan for unscheduled leave and send workers with influenza-like symptoms home.
- Provide alcohol-based (at least 60%) hand sanitizers and tissues in common workplace areas (e.g.; lobbies, corridors, counters).
- Provide disinfectants and paper towels for employees to clean their work surfaces.
- Consider methods to reduce employee interaction: flexible work schedules, telecommuting, teleconferencing vs. meetings, etc.
- Identify essential employees and business functions to maintain operations.

## A combination of strategies will help reduce the risk for infection:

- One of the best methods to reduce the spread of disease is to **wash hands often** with soap and water for 15 - 20 seconds. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve to prevent the spread of germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Flu virus can survive on surfaces 2 - 8 hours after being deposited on the surface. Disinfect commonly touched hard surfaces (counter tops, door knobs, and desks) by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to the directions on the product label.

