

# INDEPENDENT NURSING CARE

*Completing your circle of care*

## What's happening with H1N1 Influenza?

**\*Updated December 31, 2009**

Dear Valued Customer:

Below is the latest information regarding the H1N1 flu. Hopefully we can answer some of the questions you may have and communicate additional information regarding the H1N1 as of today.

Again, we at Independent Nursing Care appreciate your patronage and the confidence you have placed in us as your provider of flu shots, workplace wellness and CPR training.

This information has been updated as of December 31, 2009. For further updates, please visit [www.CDC.Gov](http://www.CDC.Gov).

### What is novel H1N1 (swine flu)?

Novel H1N1 (referred to as "swine flu" early on) is an influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) signaled that a pandemic of novel H1N1 flu was underway.

### Is H1N1 contagious?

CDC has determined that novel H1N1 virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human.

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## How severe is illness associated with novel H1N1 flu virus?

Each week CDC analyzes information about influenza disease activity in the United States and publishes findings of key flu indicators in a report called [FluView](#). During the week of December 13-19, 2009, influenza activity decreased over the previous week across most key indicators. Below is a summary of the most recent key indicators:

- [Visits to doctors](#) for influenza-like illness (ILI) nationally decreased slightly again this week over last week. This is the eighth consecutive week of national decreases in ILI however visits to doctors for ILI remains elevated in the United States.
- Influenza hospitalizations and [hospitalization](#) rates decreased in all age groups.
- [Deaths](#) attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) based on the 122 Cities Report decreased over the previous week. This is the first time in 11 weeks that this proportion has been below the [epidemic threshold](#). (The epidemic threshold is the point at which the observed proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia or influenza is significantly higher than would be expected at that time of the year in the absence of substantial influenza-related mortality.) In addition, nine flu-related [pediatric deaths](#) were reported this week: eight of these deaths were associated with laboratory confirmed 2009 H1N1, and one was associated with an influenza A virus that was not subtyped. Since April 2009, CDC has received reports of 285 laboratory-confirmed pediatric deaths: 241 due to 2009 H1N1, 42 pediatric deaths that were laboratory confirmed as influenza, but the flu virus subtype was not determined, and two pediatric deaths that were associated with seasonal influenza viruses. (Laboratory-confirmed deaths are thought to represent an [undercount](#) of the actual number. CDC has provided [estimates about the number of 2009 H1N1 cases and related hospitalizations and deaths](#).)
- Seven states continue to report [widespread influenza activity](#); a decline of four states from last week. They are: Alabama, California, Delaware, Maine, Nevada, New Jersey, and Virginia. Eighteen states are reporting regional influenza activity and 13 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are reporting local influenza activity.
- Almost all of the influenza [viruses](#) identified so far continue to be 2009 H1N1 influenza A viruses. These viruses remain similar to the virus chosen for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine, and remain susceptible to the antiviral drugs oseltamivir and zanamivir with rare exception.

\*All data are preliminary and may change as more reports are received.

## Prevention & Treatment

### What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

A novel H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and is now being distributed throughout the U.S. Be sure to get your H1N1 shot as soon as it becomes available.

Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your elbow, not your hands. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth. Flu spreads this way.

Try to avoid contact with sick people.

Stay home when you are sick, and do not return to school or work until you have been fever-free without medication for at least 24 hours.

### How does novel H1N1 virus spread?

Spread of novel H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way as seasonal flu spreads.

### How long can an infected person spread this virus to others?

People infected with seasonal and novel H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after.

## Novel H1N1 Vaccine

Every flu season has the potential to cause a lot of illness, doctor's visits, hospitalizations and deaths. CDC is concerned that the new H1N1 flu virus could result in a particularly severe flu season this year. Vaccines are the best tool we have to prevent influenza. **A novel H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and supply is steadily increasing throughout the U.S.** The novel H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine – it is intended to be used along-side seasonal flu vaccine.

On December 10, 2009 New York State suspended the requirement that the 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine be restricted to priority groups. The H1N1 vaccine now may be administered to anyone requesting the vaccine.

## Vaccine Distribution

### How much vaccine can be expected to be available for shipping when shipping begins?

The production of H1N1 vaccine is continuing and the amount of vaccine being shipped to providers is increasing weekly. As of December 29, 2009, NYS has received approximately 38,000,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine according to the CDC. This vaccine is being distributed to individual counties within NYS. Most vaccine has been allocated to hospitals and MD's at this point. The CDC expects H1N1 vaccine to become more and more available as we get through January 2010 and into February.

## Independent Nursing Care

Independent Nursing Care (INC) continues to meet with New York State, county and local officials to discuss H1N1 administration plans. Plans are being developed to distribute H1N1 vaccine as it become available.

### Where will H1N1 vaccine be available?

At this point vaccine is being distributed to each state and then distributed to each county for administration. INC is now involved in the administration of the H1N1 vaccine to schools, colleges and the general public.

**Public Clinics:** INC is currently conducting H1N1 flu clinics at our office in West Falls New York. These clinics are by appointment only. For more information please call 716-805-1020 or visit our website at [www.incnursing.com](http://www.incnursing.com). As vaccine continues to become available INC anticipates offering H1N1 vaccine at additional public sites throughout NYS.

**Employer groups and other facilities:** INC has begun scheduling H1N1 clinics for employer groups and other facilities requesting the H1N1 vaccine. Most of the clinics will be scheduled for late January and into February. For more information on scheduling an H1N1 clinic at your facility, please call 716-655-8776 or toll free at 888-264-5854 or visit our website at [www.incnursing.com](http://www.incnursing.com).

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We take our role in providing flu shots to the community very seriously and will keep you informed, as more information is made available.

Sincerely,

*Independent Nursing Care*

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