



FACTSHEET

September 4, 2009

Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport
Ministry of Health Services

PROTECTING YOUR KIDS FROM THE H1N1 FLU VIRUS

The H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu) is a type of influenza that can cause respiratory disease that can spread between people. Young children, pregnant women and people with chronic diseases like asthma, diabetes or heart disease, may be at higher risk for complications from this infection. In most children, the symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza. They include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Occasionally, vomiting and diarrhea

Flu viruses spread from person to person mainly through droplets from the coughing or sneezing of a sick person. Flu viruses may also be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with the virus and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth. The H1N1 flu vaccine is expected to arrive in British Columbia in November (or possibly earlier) and be available to everyone who needs and wants it. In the meantime, there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the H1N1 flu virus:

- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cough and sneeze into a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least two metres (six feet) away from people who are sick.
- Children who are sick should stay home from school and daycare and stay away from other people until they are better.

You can call [HealthLink BC](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) at 8-1-1, 24 hours a day/seven days a week to speak to a nurse if you have more questions or are concerned about any illness/symptoms experienced by you or your children.

For the latest facts on the H1N1 flu virus, including back-to-school information, visit www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1.

