

April 18, 2018

INFLUENZA A / H1N1

PURPOSE/APPLICATION

The H1N1 virus is a strain of pandemic influenza which is different than the season flu. People have no natural immunity to protect against the virus. The virus is affecting younger and healthy people than the regular season flu. People with underlying medical conditions, the elderly and pregnant woman may be at greater risk for severe illness.

PPE

- To be determined after evaluating risk for exposure and current medical and / or health board recommendations.

TRAINING

HAZARDS & CONCERNS

- Illness
- Biological hazard source

REFERENCES / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Key facts on H1N1 Flu virus, Public Health Agency of Canada
- Understanding the swine Flu (Influenza A H1N1) by Georgetown University

How it is Spread

- The virus is contagious and is spread the same way as a regular seasonal influenza.
- Happens when an infected person coughs or sneezes and their germs enter the eyes, nose, or throat of another person.
- Germs can also rest of hard surfaces. E.g. counters and doorknobs.
- Not possible to catch by eating pork or pork products or through blood transfusions.

Contagiousness

- Believed that a person who is infected can become contagiousness within one day of onset symptoms and continuous through 7 days there after the symptoms have started.

Symptoms

- Cough and fever is almost always
- Common symptoms include:
 - Fatigue,
 - Muscle aches,
 - Sore throat,
 - Headache,
 - Decreased appetite,
 - Runny nose.
- Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea happen sometimes.

Prevention

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol- based hand sanitizer.
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Cough and sneeze into your arm.
- Get immunized.
- Keep common surfaces clean.
- Eat healthy foods and stay active.
- **If you get sick stay home.**

Be Prepared if You Get Sick

Put together a home preparedness kit before anyone gets sick that should include:

- Pain and fever medication
- Thermometer
- Extra essential medication. (Ea.: insulin for diabetics)
- Cleaning supplies
- Soap

Treatment

If you suffer any of the flu-like symptoms listed above, stay home to recover. If the symptoms worsen seek medical attention immediately. There is not a known cure for this illness but only medications to help the virus subside.

Medical attention

If you're going to your family doctor it is advised to call ahead and notify the doctor's office that this may be an H1N1 case. They may be taking precautions by having masks ready for you and possibly have a separate room available for you to wait in.

If you are going to the emergency room notify the hospital staff immediately if you believe it is H1N1 and give them your symptoms.

Workers Returning to Work

If you believe you have H1N1 you are not to come to work and are to go to your doctor. To RETURN TO WORK, you must provide a doctor's note clearing you for work. This note must state that you will no longer spread H1N1.

