

To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County

2009 H1N1 (Swine Flu) Information Sheet

October 20, 2009

Changes from the October 13, 2009 information sheet are in **bold print**.

The 2009 H1N1 flu (swine flu) is not any more serious than seasonal influenza at this time. If conditions change, the health department will keep you informed.

Symptoms

- Symptoms of this illness are the same as those for seasonal flu. Most people will have a fever >100 °F and a cough and/or sore throat. Other symptoms may include headache, muscle ache, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and diarrhea. More adults have reported vomiting and diarrhea with 2009 H1N1 flu than with seasonal flu.

Testing

- There have been four confirmed cases of 2009 H1N1 flu in Kittitas County. One of these cases was in May, the other three were in Central Washington University students in September.
- There are likely many more cases, but the Washington State Department of Health has recommended limiting testing since we know 2009 H1N1 flu is circulating in Washington State. Testing is now being used only to monitor for increased severity of illness.
- The only people who are currently being tested for 2009 H1N1 flu are people who are hospitalized with flu-like symptoms or people who die that have had flu symptoms immediately before their death.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that 99% of samples testing positive for flu are the 2009 H1N1 flu.

Treatment

- Since 2009 H1N1 flu is no more serious than seasonal influenza at this time, the Washington State Department of Health recommends that you treat flu symptoms as you would during a normal flu season. If you would not normally see a health care provider because of the severity of your symptoms, it is not necessary to see a health care provider. If your symptoms worsen, contact a health care professional.
- Those with higher risk for complications of flu should contact their health care provider if they become ill. This includes pregnant women **or women who have given birth within the past two weeks**, people 65 and older, people who have chronic health conditions, and children younger than five (but especially children younger than two years old).
- Most patients with flu-like illness will do well if they are drinking plenty of fluids, taking medications for fever if necessary, and staying home until 24 hours after fever has gone away *without the use of fever reducing medications*.
- **People suffering from flu-like symptoms can visit a dedicated, walk-in flu clinic opened by Kittitas Valley Community Hospital in Ellensburg. Patients that have an existing primary care provider are encourage to contact their physician's office to see if the flu clinic is appropriate for their medical care or if they should be seen by their physician. Patients who do not have a primary care provider can also visit the flu clinic. The clinic is on the hospital campus at 611 S Chestnut St, Suite A, and will be open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. To contact the flu clinic call (509) 933-8787.**

Vaccination

- The best way to prevent 2009 H1N1 flu is vaccination. A vaccine has been developed and tested, **and began arriving in Kittitas County on October 13** for use in those 6 months and older.
- The vaccine to protect against 2009 H1N1 flu is a separate vaccine than the seasonal flu vaccine that is currently available.
- Initially, when vaccine availability is limited, the vaccine will be administered only to the priority groups identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). At this time, these groups are:
 - pregnant women,
 - health care and emergency services personnel,

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- people who live with or care for children less than 6 months of age,
- people between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age, and
- people from ages 25 through 64 years who are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems.
- Children 6 months through 9 years of age will need to receive two doses of vaccine at least 28 days apart to be most effective.
- Residents are encouraged to use their normal route for immunizations. If you have a local health care provider, contact your provider to see if vaccine is available. If you do not have a local health care provider, contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department at (509) 962-7515.
- School-based immunization clinics are expected to be held in **early November and beyond**.
- A Saturday public immunization clinic will be hosted by the health department in November for those in the priority groups who have not yet been able to receive vaccine from their primary care provider.
- **Due to national delays in vaccine production, vaccine may not be available to the general public until January.**

Prevention

- Anyone who is sick with a respiratory illness and fever should stay home, not go to work or school, wash their hands often, and cover their cough/sneeze. Stay home until 24 hours after fever has gone away *without the use of fever reducing medications*.
- The best way to protect yourself from disease is to:
 - Avoid contact with ill individuals;
 - Stay home from work or school when you are sick;
 - Cover your cough and/or sneeze; and
 - Wash your hands many times a day.
- It is recommended that all individuals who have influenza-like illness wear a face mask when they must enter crowded areas, such as a health care facility. Those with influenza-like illness should not enter crowded areas unless absolutely necessary, especially without a face mask.
- If you are planning to visit a health care provider and you have influenza-like illness symptoms, call ahead to request a mask to wear in the health care facility.
- Health care providers treating individuals with influenza-like illness are being recommended to use special face masks called N95.

For More Information

- Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2009 H1N1 flu website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.
- Visit the Washington State Department of Health 2009 H1N1 flu website at www.doh.wa.gov/h1n1flu or call 1-888-703-4634.
- Visit the Kittitas County Public Health Department 2009 H1N1 website at www.co.kittitas.wa.us/response/h1n1.asp.

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