H1N1 INFLUENZA (FLU) INFORMATION

H1N1 is a respiratory disease. Prepare for flu outbreaks as you would for all hazards:

Get a Kit

- Get an emergency supply kit for your family, to last a minimum of two weeks.

Make a Plan

- Make a family emergency plan, including provision to care for extended family, and include a communication plan to keep in touch.
- Plan alternative transportation routes to school and work, and consider whether it is possible to work from home.
- Include key information from your local emergency plans including warning signals, evacuation routes, shelter locations, and points of distribution.

Be Informed

- Learn about the hazard. Following this page is information on the current H1N1 virus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Learn and practice prevention techniques, including good hygiene and social distancing:
  - Wash your hands.
  - Limit direct contact by not shaking hands. Do not share objects with someone who is sick (utensils, remote controls, pens, etc.).
  - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces including door knobs, light switches and toilet handles.
  - Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
  - Teach your children flu prevention hygiene.
  - If someone in your house is sick you should also stay at home until they no longer feel sick.
  - In general, get vaccinated to boost immunity to flu viruses.

In an Emergency Response

- Be calm—stay informed and follow emergency plans.
- Practice infection control:
  - Continue to wash your hands and limit direct contact.
  - Telecommute or hold telephone or video conferences.
  - Maintain personal space of at least three feet.
  - Limit exposure to sick people.
- Quarantine and isolation measures may be used to limit the movement of people who may have been exposed to the disease and separate those infected with the disease.
- If directed, report to your command using the Army Disaster Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (ADPAAS).

Visit **www.ready.army.mil** for resources to help you prepare, including information about emergency kits and how to make a family plan.

How serious is H1N1 infection?
Like seasonal flu, H1N1 in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. H1N1 infection can be serious. In September 1988, a previously healthy 32-year-old pregnant woman in Wisconsin was hospitalized for pneumonia after being infected with H1N1 and died eight days later. A H1N1 flu outbreak in Fort Dix, New Jersey occurred in 1976 that caused more than 200 cases with serious illness in several people and one death.

What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1 flu?
The symptoms of H1N1 in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with H1N1 infection in people. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

How does H1N1 spread?
Spread of this H1N1 virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How can someone with the flu infect someone else?
Infected people may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to seven or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

What should I do to keep from getting the flu?
There is no vaccine available right now to protect against H1N1. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- First and most importantly, wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Wash for at least 15–20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective and can be used if soap and water are not available. You can find these cleaners in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.
- Try not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

Are there medicines to treat this type of H1N1?

Yes. CDC recommends the use of oseltamivir or zanamivir for the treatment and/or prevention of infection with these influenza viruses. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within two days of symptoms).

How long can an infected person spread this flu to others?
People with H1N1 infection should be considered potentially contagious as long as they are symptomatic and possibly for up to seven days following illness onset. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

What surfaces are most likely to be sources of contamination?
Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth. Droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air. Germs can be spread when people touch respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touch their own eyes, mouth or nose before washing hands.

How long can viruses live outside the body?
We know that some viruses and bacteria can live two hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs and desks. Frequent hand-washing will help you reduce the chance of getting contamination from these common surfaces.

What should I do if I get sick?
If you live in areas where H1N1 influenza cases have been identified and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea, you may want to contact your health-care provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. Your health-care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care.

In **children** emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include the following:
- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In **adults**, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include the following:
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?

If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and put your used tissue in the waste basket. This may prevent those around you from getting sick. if you do not have a tissue, cover your cough or sneeze with your hand, then disinfect your hands as described above.

Can I get H1N1 influenza from eating or preparing pork?
No. H1N1 viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get H1N1 influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit good for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family, and be informed about what might happen.