

When Flu Is In YOUR House

When providing care to a household member who is sick with influenza, the most important ways to protect yourself and others who are not sick are to:

- Keep the sick person away from other people as much as possible (see “placement of the sick person”) especially others who are at high risk for complications from influenza.
- Remind the sick person to cover their coughs, and clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after coughing and/or sneezing.
- Have everyone in the household clean their hands often, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. Children may need reminders or help keeping their hands clean.
- Ask your health care provider if household contacts of the sick person—particularly those contacts who may be pregnant or have chronic health conditions—should take antiviral medications such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (Relenza®) to prevent the flu.
- If you are in a high risk group for complications from influenza, you should attempt to avoid close contact (within 6 feet) with household members who are sick with influenza. If close contact with a sick individual is unavoidable, consider wearing a facemask or respirator, if available and tolerable. Infants should not be cared for by sick family members. For more information, see the Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use.



People with H1N1 flu who are cared for at home should:

- Check with their health care provider about any special care they might need if they are pregnant or have a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema.
- Check with their health care provider about whether they should take antiviral medications.
- Stay home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer, except to seek medical care or for other necessities.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after using tissues and after coughing or sneezing into hands.
- Wear a facemask – if available and tolerable – when sharing common spaces with other household members to help prevent spreading the virus to others. This is especially important if other household members are at high risk for complications from influenza.
- Avoid close contact with others – do not go to work or school while ill.

Antiviral Drugs

Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) with activity against influenza viruses, including swine influenza viruses. Antiviral drugs can be used to treat swine flu or to prevent infection with swine flu viruses. These medications must be prescribed by a health care professional. Influenza antiviral drugs only work against influenza viruses -- they will not help treat or prevent symptoms caused by infection from other viruses that can cause symptoms similar to the flu.



There are four influenza antiviral drugs approved for use in the United States (oseltamivir, zanamivir, amantadine and rimantadine).

Benefits of Antiviral Drugs

Treatment: If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious influenza complications. Influenza antiviral drugs work best when started soon after illness onset (within two [2] days), but treatment with antiviral drugs should still be considered after 48 hours of symptom onset, particularly for hospitalized patients or people at high risk for influenza-related complications.

Prevention: Influenza antiviral drugs also can be used to prevent influenza when they are given to a person who is not ill, but who has been or may be near a person with swine influenza. When used to prevent the flu, antiviral drugs are about 70% to 90% effective. When used for prevention, the number of days that they should be used will vary depending on a person's particular situation.



For more information on influenza and Pandemic flu visit the following websites:

www.cdc.gov • www.who.org • www.pandemicflu.com • www.in.gov/isdh/

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