

# FM SAFETY ALERT

## H1N1 Virus

September 2009

### Issue:

Public health experts say that H1N1 is a highly communicable virus that they expect to run rapidly through the U.S. population this fall. At this writing, persons 25 years old and younger are more susceptible to contracting the virus than older persons, but everyone is at some risk.

Most who contract H1N1 will feel ill but will not need to visit their health care providers. Keeping hydrated, treating fever, and getting plenty of rest will speed recovery in 5-7 days. The CDC recommends resuming normal activities 24 hours after fever subsides without the aid of medication.

However, there are individuals at much more serious risk of H1N1 flu: pregnant women and persons with chronic illnesses, including asthma, diabetes, and conditions causing impaired immune systems. If you are among those with these conditions, you should contact your health care provider now to develop a prevention and treatment plan. If you are among those with these conditions and have been exposed to or experience flu symptom onset, seek medical care promptly.

### Prevention

Public health experts recommend some simple measures to help prevent or reduce the spread of 2009 H1N1 flu:

1. Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-percent alcohol.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, then cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder and **not** into your hands.
3. If you become ill, stay home until you recover.
4. The CDC recommends that you get a seasonal flu shot as early as possible after it becomes available in September. Vaccine for the H1N1 influenza is expected to become available later this fall.
5. Check the [University H1N1 website](http://www1.umn.edu/prepared/ahc_prepared/flu/swine.html) <[http://www1.umn.edu/prepared/ahc\\_prepared/flu/swine.html](http://www1.umn.edu/prepared/ahc_prepared/flu/swine.html)> for up-to-date information, and watch for email updates.

