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Public Affairs Office**

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Fact Sheet: Taking care of someone with Novel H1N1 Influenza

The following information is based on guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

H1N1 Defined: Novel H1N1 Influenza is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, similar to the way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization signaled that a pandemic of Novel H1N1 Influenza was underway.

Symptoms: Flu-like symptoms include high fever greater than or equal to 100.5 degrees F, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.

People who have H1N1 who are staying 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.
- Keep away from others as much as possible to prevent making others sick. Do not go to work or school while ill.
- Stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to seek medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- Get plenty of rest, drink clear fluids and cover coughs and sneezes.
- For healthcare workers, childcare workers and certain military/operational situations, home isolation/exclusion remains 7 days from symptom onset or until 24 hours after resolution of symptoms, whichever is longer.
- Be watchful for emergency warning signs (see below).

When to seek emergency care: If the person with the flu begins to show any of the following symptoms, immediately seek emergency care:

- Has difficulty breathing or chest pain.
- Has purple or blue discoloration of the lips.
- Has bloody or colored phlegm.
- Is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down.
- Has signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry.
- Has seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions).
- Is less responsive than normal or becomes confused.

If you are the caregiver:

- Avoid being face-to-face with the sick person.
- When holding small children who are sick, place their chin on your shoulder so that they will not cough in your face.
- Clean your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub after you touch the sick person or handle used tissues, or laundry.

- If you are at high risk of influenza associated complications, you should not be the designated caretaker, if possible.
- 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.

Placement of the Sick Person:

- Keep the sick person in a room separate from the common areas of the house. For example, a spare bedroom with its own bathroom, if that's possible. Keep the sickroom door closed.
- If persons with the flu need to leave the home (for example, for medical care), they should wear a facemask, if available and tolerable, and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- Have the sick person wear a facemask, if available and tolerable, if they need to be in a common area of the house near other persons.
- If possible, sick persons should use a separate bathroom. This bathroom should be cleaned daily with household disinfectant.

Steps to lessen the spread of Flu in the home:

- The sick person should not have visitors, other than caregivers. A phone call is safer than a visit.
- If possible, have only one adult in the home take care of the sick person. People at increased risk of severe illness from flu should not be the designated caretaker, if possible.
- All persons in the household should clean their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub frequently, including after every contact with the sick person or the person's room or bathroom. People caring for those with the flu should wash their hands before touching their nose, mouth or eyes.
- Use paper towels for drying hands after hand washing or dedicate cloth towels to each person in the household. For example, have different colored towels for each person.
- If possible, consideration should be given to maintaining good ventilation in shared household areas, such as keeping windows open in restrooms, kitchen and the bathroom.
- Avoid having sick family members care for infants and other groups at high risk for complications of influenza (including those 65 and older, pregnant or with significant medical conditions).

For more information:

- If you have health-related questions, you can always call the Nurse Advice Line and be connected with a registered nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A nurse will help answer your questions and make an appointment for you at your local health clinic if needed.
 - Nurse Advice Line from a DSN phone: 99-0800-825-1600
 - Nurse Advice Line from a civilian phone: 00800-4759-2330
- If you have further questions, contact your local health clinic. A medical professional will help you decide if you need to come in for an appointment.
 - USAHC Bamberg: DSN: 469-1750, Civilian: 0951-300-1750
 - USAHC Grafenwoehr: DSN: 475-7152, Civilian: 09641-83-7152
 - USAHC Hohenfels: DSN: 466-1750, Civilian: 09472-83-1750
 - USAHC Illesheim: DSN: 467-1750, Civilian: 09841-83-1750
 - USAHC Katterbach: DSN: 467-3398, Civilian: 09802-83-3398
 - USAHC Schweinfurt: DSN: 354-7901, Civilian: 09721-96-7901
 - USAHC Vilseck: DSN: 476-2882, Civilian: 09662-83-2882
- For general information about Novel H1N1 Influenza, check out the following Web sites:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
 - World Health Organization: www.who.int
 - Flu.gov: www.pandemicflu.gov
 - DoD Watch Board: <http://fhp.osd.mil/aiWatchboard/>

The information in this fact sheet was taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. For additional information, visit their site at www.cdc.gov. For local updates, check the Bavaria MEDDAC Web site at: <https://ermc.amedd.army.mil/Bavaria/index.cfm>.