

Quick Flu Tips for Parents & Caregivers

Here are things that you and your children can do to help prevent the flu:

- 1) Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also work.
- 2) Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.** If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow or shoulder, not into your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth as germs are spread this way.
- 3) Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Look for possible signs of fever, such as if a person feels very warm, has a flushed appearance, or is sweating or shivering. Other symptoms may include cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Sometimes people also have diarrhea and vomiting.
- 4) Get vaccinated for both seasonal and H1N1 flu.** H1N1 vaccine will be available to all, but people 6 months through 24 years of age will be a priority. Some people are at higher risk for complications from the H1N1 flu and it is especially important that they get the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available:
 - People at higher risk for H1N1 complications include pregnant women and people of any age with medical conditions such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes.
 - Children under five years, particularly those under two years, are also at high risk from H1N1 flu because they are more likely to become very sick and need hospital care.

If you have the flu or a flu-like illness:

- **Stay home for at least 24 hours after fever has passed** without the use of fever-reducing medications. Young children with illness should not be in child care and students need to stay home from school, sports practices, and games.
- **You probably don't need to have a lab test or take antiviral medicine.** If your child has the flu now, it is very likely that it is H1N1 flu. Testing for H1N1 flu is necessary only when patients are sick enough to be hospitalized or have severe illness. Antiviral medications are not recommended except for people at higher risk for complications or with severe illness.
- **You don't need to see your doctor unless you have unusually severe illness.** Most people experience and recover from H1N1 flu just as they do from seasonal flu.
- **Children don't need a note from a doctor to return to school or child care** after they are well again. Also, there is no reason for employers to request a doctor's note for teens and adults who are returning to work. Writing notes takes away valuable time from patients who need immediate medical care.

For more information, go to www.kingcounty.gov/health/h1n1

or call the Flu Hotline at 1-877-903-5464