

## H1N1 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**High-risk groups:** A person who is at high-risk for complications of novel influenza (H1N1) virus infection is defined as the same for seasonal influenza at this time. As more epidemiologic and clinical data become available, these risk groups might be revised.

- Children between six months and 24 years old.
- Pregnant women.
- Health care workers
- Care givers
- Adults 65 years of age and older with medical complications
- Persons with the following conditions:
  - Chronic pulmonary (including asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus);
  - Immunosuppression, including that caused by medications or by HIV;
  - Persons younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy;
  - Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

**Transmission:** Transmission of novel influenza A (H1N1) is being studied as part of the ongoing outbreak investigation, but limited data available indicate that this virus is likely transmitted in ways similar to other influenza viruses. Seasonal human influenza viruses are thought to be transmitted between persons primarily through large-particle respiratory droplet transmission (e.g., when an infected person coughs or sneezes near a susceptible person). Transmission via these large-particle droplets requires close contact between source and recipient persons because droplets do not remain suspended in the air and generally travel only a short distance (< 6 feet). Contact with contaminated surfaces is another possible source of transmission and transmission via small-droplet nuclei (also called “airborne” transmission) might also occur, but the contribution of these modes of transmission to influenza epidemiology is uncertain. Because data on the transmission of novel H1N1 viruses are limited, the potential for ocular, conjunctival, or gastrointestinal infection is unknown. Since this is a novel influenza A (H1N1) virus in humans, transmission from infected persons to close contacts might be common. All respiratory secretions and bodily fluids (diarrheal stool) of novel influenza A (H1N1) cases should be considered potentially infectious.

Close contact is defined as having cared for or lived with a person who is a confirmed, probable or suspected case of novel influenza A (H1N1), or having been in a setting where there was a high likelihood of contact with respiratory droplets and/or body fluids of such a person. Examples of close contact include kissing or embracing, sharing eating or drinking utensils, physical examination, or any other contact between persons likely to result in exposure to respiratory droplets. Close contact typically does not include activities such as walking by an infected person or sitting across from a symptomatic patient in a waiting room or office

## Sick persons should stay home.

- Everyone should be alert to any signs of fever and any other signs of influenza-like illness. People who are ill should not travel while they are ill.
- CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- Generally, JFCS requires at least 24-hours notice for the cancellation of an appointment. Appointments cancelled with less than 24-hours notice are subject to a cancellation fee. However, if you are experiencing influenza-like symptoms, your appointment may be cancelled with less than 24-hours notice and will not be subject to the cancellation fee.

### *Prevention:*

#### Cover coughs and sneezes

- Influenza viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. Everyone should be aware of the importance of covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue.
- Place used tissues in receptacles.

#### Improve hand hygiene

- Influenza may be spread via contaminated hands. Everyone is instructed to wash their hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner which are being provided and placed in multiple locations, especially after coughing or sneezing.

#### Clean surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact

- Frequently clean all commonly touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label.
- No additional disinfection beyond routine cleaning is recommended.

#### Everyone is encouraged to get vaccinated

- Everyone is encouraged to get vaccinated for seasonal influenza. For information on groups prioritized for seasonal influenza vaccines, please click [here](#).
- Everyone is also encouraged to get vaccinated for 2009 H1N1 influenza when vaccines are available to them. Different groups are prioritized for 2009 H1N1 influenza than for seasonal influenza. For information on groups prioritized for H1N1 influenza vaccine please click [here](#).