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Health and wellness tips for your work, home, and life—brought to you by the insurance and healthcare specialists at PSW Benefit Resources and Insurance Services.

# All You Need to Know about H1N1 Flu

## *Your Questions Answered*

A new kind of flu caused by the influenza A (H1N1) virus has recently emerged. Human cases of the H1N1 flu and associated deaths have been identified in both the United States and internationally.

### **What is H1N1?**

H1N1 is a respiratory disease that causes a regular outbreak in pigs. Humans do not normally get H1N1, yet infections can occur, and have now been reported and spread from person to person.

### **Is H1N1 Contagious?**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that H1N1 is contagious in humans. In fact, sick individuals may be able to infect others beginning one day before their symptoms develop and up to seven days or more after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know that you are sick, as well as while you are still battling the virus.

### **Can You Get H1N1 from Eating Pork?**

Absolutely not. But, as you probably know, you need to cook pork thoroughly to avoid getting other diseases that can be spread by undercooked meat.

### **Are there Medications to Treat H1N1?**

There are two medications available, and are most effective when they are used within two days of showing symptoms.

### **What Can You do to Protect Yourself Against H1N1?**

There is no vaccine currently available to protect against this virus. However, there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing. Throw the tissue away after using it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after sneezing and coughing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- If you do become sick with H1N1, stay home from work

or school and limit your contact with others to keep from infecting them.

### **What Should You Do if You Get Sick?**

If you live in areas where H1N1 has been identified and you become ill with influenza-like symptoms – fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting or diarrhea – contact your healthcare provider immediately. He/she will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is necessary.

For more information on H1N1, visit [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) or call (800) 232-4636.



### **If You are Taking a Trip...**

to an area where H1N1 cases have been reported, pay close attention to announcements from the local government, follow all local public health guidelines and wash your hands often with soap and water.