

What if You Get Flu Symptoms?



About the Flu

- Seasonal flu occurs every year, and because it changes slightly each time, there is a new vaccine each year. The seasonal flu causes illness, hospitalizations and deaths every year.
- The Pandemic H1N1 2009 (swine) flu virus is now widespread in our community and people have little immunity to it. The illness caused by H1N1 is similar to seasonal flu, and most people who get it will recover without needing medical care. However, H1N1 flu will continue to cause absences from work, school and child care.
- This new Pandemic H1N1 virus could change to cause more severe illness or more widespread disease in the fall and winter. It is anticipated it will cause an increased number of hospitalizations and flu related deaths.
- Prevention efforts are continuing. Berkeley Public Health Division is following local, state and national developments so we will know, and let you know, if there is any sign the virus is becoming more severe.
- You can protect yourself and others by, covering your cough and sneeze, frequent handwashing and staying home if you are sick.

It's Important to Recognize the Symptoms of Flu

The symptoms of Pandemic H1N1 2009 flu include **fever with a cough or sore throat**, and sometimes body aches, headache, chills, and feeling tired. Some people also have diarrhea and vomiting. If you are sick it's important to stay home and away from other household members as much as possible to protect them. Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or elbow, or cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and dispose in the garbage. Wash your hands often. You could be sick for a week or longer and contagious until you are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Treatment is Available for Those who are Seriously Ill

- Most people can be managed at home and recover without seeking medical care.
- Testing for flu is only recommended for those who are hospitalized or in certain high risk groups.
- Antiviral drugs can be given to those who become seriously ill or to those who are at high risk for complications. They work best if given within 2 days of becoming ill. High risk groups are: children under 5 years of age; people with chronic health conditions such as lung, heart, and liver disease; pregnant women; and those over 65 years of age.
- For relief of fever, acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be given to children over 5 years of age. Aspirin should not be given to children under 18 years of age because of the risk of Reyes syndrome. Check ingredient labels on over-the-counter (non-prescription) medication.
- Children younger than 4 years of age should NOT be given over-the-counter medications without first speaking with a health care provider.

Emergency Warning Signs of Serious Illness

If you or your child becomes ill with any of these serious signs of illness, seek emergency medical care.

Children	Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trouble breathing• Bluish or gray skin color• Not drinking enough fluids• Severe vomiting• Not waking up or not interacting• Being so irritable the child does not want to be held• Symptoms improve, then return and worsen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath• Pain or pressure in chest or abdomen• Sudden dizziness• Confusion• Severe vomiting• Flu symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough.

For information on vaccinations check with your health care provider. Discuss your concerns if your child has chronic health conditions or allergies. Also check the City of Berkeley website www.cityofberkeley.info/publichealth/ or call Nurse of the Day at (510) 981-5300 for information on vaccinations, finding a medical provider, OR APPLYING FOR Medi-Cal.