



H1N1/09 SWINE FLU

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS H1N1? H1N1 is an influenza virus also known as the swine flu, because this strain originated in pigs. It causes a respiratory illness in humans who get it.

WHAT IS INFLUENZA A? There are two “types” of influenza: A and B. Influenza B are strains of the virus that originate in humans and circulate each flu season. Influenza A types originate in birds and over time mutate so that they can infect humans. Some of these too circulate each flu season. Influenza A types can also lead to influenza pandemics.

I HAVE INFLUENZA A - DO I HAVE H1N1? Your doctor or hospital may tell you that you have influenza A. Only a lab test can determine if it is H1N1, which is a A-type of influenza. As of fall 2009, H1N1 is the dominate strain of influenza circulating in humans, so if you have influenza A, it is very possible that it is H1N1.

HOW DO HUMANS CATCH H1N1? Humans get H1N1 in the same manner as they do any strain of seasonal influenza: through contact with airborne respiratory secretions released via coughing and sneezing. They may be inhaled or can get on our hands when we touch a contaminated surface or object.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS? Basically the same as seasonal flu: high fever, head and body aches; dry hacking cough; chills and fatigue.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF? As with seasonal flu the best way to protect yourself is with basic public health practices: Wash your hands regularly, especially if you have touched a common surface such as a door knob, money, stair rail, etc. Always cover your coughs or sneezes. If you don't feel well stay home. Never send your child to school or daycare when they are ill. If you are worried about catching the virus, avoid crowds or stay at home.

IS THERE A VACCINE FOR THE H1N1 INFLUENZA VIRUS? The vaccine should begin arriving at local health districts in mid-October.

WHO WILL GET THE VACCINE? Federal officials have identified those most at-risk and those who will get the H1N1 vaccine first: pregnant women; healthcare workers; young people aged six months to 18 years; persons aged 19-64 with chronic health issues; caregivers of children younger than six months of age; and emergency medical services workers.

IF I HAVE SYMPTOMS WHAT DO I DO? At this time you should call your physician for their advice and guidance.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION? Our Website: www.rosscountyhealth.com, or call the Ohio Department of Health's H1N1 Hotline, 866-800-1404.