

Staying Healthy

This season, there is a seasonal flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu viruses and a 2009 H1N1 vaccine to protect against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus (sometimes called “swine flu”). **A flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu infection.** It is recommended to get both vaccines when they become available.

There are also everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the flu.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.
- Keep yourself as healthy as possible by exercising regularly, eating well, getting enough rest, and keeping stress to a minimum.

Other important actions that you can take are:

- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, if you can take them (check with your healthcare provider), alcohol-based hand rubs (for when soap and water are not available), tissues and other related items could help you to avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick and contagious.

Antiviral Drugs:

- Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that can be used to treat H1N1 (Swine) flu, or to prevent infection with H1N1 flu viruses. These medications must be prescribed by a health care professional.
- If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious influenza complications.
- For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started within the first 2 days of symptoms.
- When used to prevent the flu, antiviral drugs are about 70% to 90% effective.
- There are four influenza antiviral drugs approved for use in the United States (oseltamivir, zanamivir, amantadine and rimantadine). Only two, oseltamivir and zanamivir are effective in treating H1N1 flu.

<p align="center">General Information on Oseltamivir (TAMIFLU®)</p>	<p align="center">General Information on Zanamivir (RELENZA®)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oseltamivir (TAMIFLU®) is approved to both treat and prevent influenza A and B virus infection. ○ Oseltamivir (TAMIFLU®) is effective in people 1 year of age and older. ○ Oseltamivir (TAMIFLU®) comes in capsule form and in liquid form that can be measured for proper dosage. <p>What are the possible side effects from taking TAMIFLU®? The most common side effects of TAMIFLU® are nausea and vomiting. These are not usually severe and usually happen in the first 2 days of treatment.</p> <p>More information and recommended dosage, side effects and warnings (PDF) visit: http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/eua/pdf/tamiflu-patients.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zanamivir (Relenza ®) is approved to treat and, in some cases, prevent influenza A and B virus infection. ○ Zanamivir (Relenza ®) is effective in people 7 years and older and can prevent influenza A and B virus infection in people 5 years and older. ○ Zanamivir (Relenza ®) is packaged in a medicine disk called a Rotadisk® and is inhaled by mouth using a delivery device called a Diskhaler®. <p>What are the possible side effects from taking (Relenza ®)? People should be aware of the risk of increased difficulty breathing, especially among people with a history of underlying breathing problems. If patients have increased difficulty breathing, they should stop Relenza and get medical attention right away.</p> <p>More information and recommended dosage, side effects and warnings visit: http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/DrugSafety/InformationbyDrugClass/UCM143860.pdf</p>

Information taken from www.pandemicflu.gov and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.