

H1N1 Influenza 09 (Human Swine Flu)

Protect yourself. Protect others.



We all have a role to play to protect ourselves and to protect others this flu season.

We have moved to the response phase called 'Protect' as part of the plan to manage the impact of H1N1 (Human Swine Flu) in Australia.

This phase recognises infections of Human Swine Flu have not been as severe as first thought in the majority of the Australian population.

A small percentage of people however, will experience severe symptoms that could require intensive medical care and hospitalisation. While this is more likely to occur in high-risk groups, it is also possible in the general healthy population, including young adults and adolescents.

What does 'Protect' mean for Victorians?

- Currently the majority of people experiencing flu-like symptoms are making a full recovery without medical treatment. This means that those with mild influenza will no longer need to be given antivirals or Tamiflu.
- We still recommend voluntary home quarantine if you have mild flu. Stay at home to protect others from the flu until you have recovered.
- There will be a continued focus on people from high-risk groups who have flu-like symptoms: pregnant women, those with respiratory disease (such as asthma), heart disease, diabetes, renal disease, morbid obesity and immunosuppression.
- In the majority of cases schools will no longer be closed.

What action is the government taking?

- Continued identification and treatment of people with moderate or severe flu-like symptoms.
- Control of outbreaks in high-risk settings such as specialised schools and aged care facilities.
- Increased surveillance of influenza through monitoring hospital admissions and presentations especially in intensive care wards.

Your best defence against the flu

- Be immunized – the seasonal flu vaccine is not expected to provide protection against human swine flu. However, it is still recommended for people over 65, and those under 65 with chronic medical conditions.
- People with mild flu-like symptoms should stay home.
- People who are moderately unwell with flu-like symptoms should call ahead then visit their GP.
- Only if you are seriously unwell, visit an emergency department.
- Wash your hands. Wash them often with soap and water.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Need to find out more?

- Visit www.health.vic.gov.au
- Call the Swine Influenza hotline on **180 2007**
- Call Nurse-on-Call on **1300 60 60 24**.