



FLU COMPARISON

H1N1 FLU VS. SEASONAL FLU

	H1N1 Influenza	Seasonal Influenza
What is it?	2009 novel H1N1 influenza is a respiratory illness caused by a brand new Type A influenza virus formed from swine flu, avian flu and human flu viruses.	Seasonal flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus. Seasonal flu can be Type A or Type B influenza.
Is it contagious?	Yes. It can be spread from one day before a person develops symptoms to up to seven days after their symptoms start. Children can spread the virus to others even longer than seven days after they become sick.	Yes. It can be spread from one day before a person develops symptoms to up to seven days after their symptoms start. Children can spread the virus to others even longer than seven days after they become sick.
How does it spread?	H1N1 is spread through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. Other people may breathe them in, or the droplets may land on a surface where they can be picked up by someone's hands and infect them as long as eight hours later.	Seasonal flu is spread through respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. Other people may breathe them in, or the droplets may land on a surface where they can be picked up by someone's hands and infect them as long as eight hours later.
When does it strike?	Approximately every 30 – 35 years, although new viruses can form at any time.	Seasonal flu hits the United States every year, usually beginning in October and extending through April or May.
Who can get it?	Anyone can get H1N1 influenza.	Anyone can get seasonal influenza.
Who is most at risk?	Children, pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, heart and lung disease) are most at risk for infection and severe illness from H1N1 influenza.	Senior adults, young children, pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, heart and lung disease) are most at risk for serious complications from seasonal influenza.
How many people get sick from it?	The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that at least a million people in the United States have had H1N1 since April 2009. However, it is impossible to know exactly, since laboratory testing is not being done on every person with flu-like symptoms. From April 2009 through August 2009, the CDC reports a total of just over 9,000 hospitalizations associated with H1N1.	Each year in the United States, about 5% to 20% of the population (15 – 60 million Americans) get seasonal flu. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related complications.
How many people die from it?	From April 2009 through August 2009, the CDC reports just under 600 deaths associated with H1N1.	Every year approximately 36,000 people die of flu-related causes.

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What are the symptoms?	Symptoms of H1N1 include a fever of 100°F or more, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, tiredness and runny or stuffy nose. Some people have also had diarrhea and vomiting.	Symptoms of seasonal flu include a fever of 100°F or more, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, tiredness and runny or stuffy nose.
Is anyone immune to it?	Most people have no immunity to a new virus. Studies have shown that senior adults born before 1957 appear to have some limited immunity to H1N1.	Flu viruses change each year, so while people may have some immunity, an annual seasonal flu vaccination is the best way to ensure protection against the viruses experts predict will strike during a particular flu season.
How is it treated?	Two anti-viral medications have proven to be effective at shortening the duration of H1N1 and lessening the severity of symptoms. However, anti-viral medication is not recommended for everyone and must be prescribed by a health care provider.	Anti-viral medication can help a person with seasonal flu not be quite as sick and get well sooner, but anti-viral medication is not recommended for everyone and it must be prescribed by a health care provider.
What should I do if I have it?	<p>If you are an otherwise healthy adult, go home and rest. Drink plenty of liquids, monitor your fever and stay home until you have not had a fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.</p> <p>People in the high risk groups above should also contact their health care provider as soon as they begin to feel flu-like symptoms.</p>	<p>If you are an otherwise healthy adult, go home and rest. Drink plenty of liquids, monitor your fever and stay home until you have not had a fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication.</p> <p>People in the high risk groups above should also contact their health care provider as soon as they begin to feel flu-like symptoms.</p>
Is a vaccine available?	A vaccine for H1N1 is expected to be released in mid- to late October 2009.	Seasonal flu vaccine is produced each year and is usually available locally in October or November.
How effective is the vaccine?	Early reports from clinical trials of H1N1 vaccine in healthy adults show it effectively developed immunity within 14 days.	Getting an annual flu shot is the very best protection against seasonal flu. People who are vaccinated for seasonal flu will develop immunity approximately 14 days after they get the flu shot. Immunity typically lasts through the current flu season.
Are vaccinations required?	No, H1N1 vaccinations are voluntary and will be offered first to people at highest risk for severe illness from H1N1. As more vaccine becomes available, everyone will be given the chance to get a vaccination.	No, seasonal flu vaccinations are voluntary and are offered every year, usually through local public health departments, health care provider offices and other community outlets.
Besides getting a vaccination, are there other ways I can protect myself?	Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself against influenza viruses, but you can also use proven disease prevention methods like frequent handwashing with soap and water, keeping a distance of at least six feet from people who are sick and not touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Making healthy lifestyle choices will also help boost your immune system.	Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself against influenza viruses, but you can also use proven disease prevention methods like frequent handwashing with soap and water, keeping a distance of at least six feet from people who are sick and not touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Making healthy lifestyle choices will also help boost your immune system.