



H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu) – FAST FACTS

ProHome Health Services is taking all measures possible to ensure our staff and clients are protected and well informed regarding the H1N1 Influenza A. H1N1 Influenza A (swine flu) has recently made the headlines. The infection is spreading and although public health agencies have been able to disseminate information about the situation in a timely way, you may have some unanswered questions. Below you will find some frequently asked questions and answers that may give you a better understanding of the recent news. As well there are several websites listed at the end of the FAQ that you can reference for more information.

Q. What is the H1N1 Influenza A and how is it spread?

A. H1N1 Influenza A is a specific kind of influenza A virus that can cause respiratory illness in humans. All influenza viruses are spread through droplets in an infected person's mucous. The droplets are most commonly transferred when the infected person sneezes or coughs.

Q. How do I know if I have the H1N1 Influenza A?

A. In Canada, very few cases of H1N1 Influenza A have been reported to date. The symptoms are the same as any other strain of flu (fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, and coughing). If you have been to Mexico since the beginning of April and are experiencing flu-like symptoms, see your doctor. Tests can determine if you have the H1N1 Influenza A virus. If you are experiencing any flu-like symptoms, even if you haven't been to Mexico, you should stay at home. Minimize your contact with others, and visit your doctor. If you have been in contact from someone who has travelled to Mexico and they are exhibiting symptoms, both parties should ensure they are using proper infection control measures, including proper hand washing and mask.

Q. What can I do to stay healthy?

A. Since influenza is spread through person to person contact, frequent and proper handwashing is the most effective way to protect yourself. It is also important to sneeze and cough into your sleeve (the inside of your elbow) or a tissue. Be sure to dispose of the tissue in a garbage receptacle after use.

Q. How long can the virus live outside the body?

A. It has not been confirmed how long this strain of influenza can live outside the body (e.g. on doorknobs, telephones, and keyboards). However, most influenza like strains can survive up to 8 hours on most surfaces.

Other recommendations;

Wash your hands

- By thoroughly washing your hands with soap under warm running water, you will reduce your chances of contacting the flu
- Alcohol-based hand gel/santizer can also be used if soap and water are not readily available. Be sure to use products that contain more than 60% alcohol for full effectiveness.

Practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette

- Cover your mouth and/or nose to reduce the spread of germs. Do this by using a tissue or coughing/sneezing into your arm at the elbow. Remember to wash your hands afterwards and dispose of tissues once used.

Monitor your Health

- If you develop flu like symptoms seek medical attention

Websites for more information;

www.cdc.gov	Centre for Disease Control
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca	Public Health Agency of Canada
www.fightflu.ca	Fight Flu
www.voyage.gc.ca	Travel Advisories
www.who.int	World Health Organization