



Home Care Guidance: Physician Directions to Patient/Parent

August 5, 2009 5:00 PM ET

This document has been updated in accordance with the [CDC Recommendations for the Amount of Time Persons with Influenza-Like Illness Should be Away from Others. \(/h1n1flu/guidance/exclusion.htm\)](#) This document provides interim guidance and will be updated as needed.

You will probably be sick for several days with fever and respiratory symptoms.

Take Medications as Prescribed:

- Take all of the antiviral medication as directed.
- Continue to cover your cough and wash your hands often, even when taking antiviral medications, to prevent spreading influenza to others.
- Call the office if you (or your child) experience any side effects; i.e. nausea, vomiting, rash, or unusual behavior.
- Take medications for symptom relief as needed for fever and pain such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), and cough medicine. These medicines do not need to be taken regularly if your symptoms improve.
- Do **not** give aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) or products that contain aspirin (e.g. bismuth subsalicylate – Pepto Bismol) to children or teenagers 18 years old or younger.
- Children younger than 4 years of age should not be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a health care provider.

Seek Emergency Care

If your child experiences any of the following:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

Follow These Home Care Recommendations:

- Stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone ([/h1n1flu/guidance/exclusion.htm](#)) except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
- Keep away from others as much as possible. This is to keep from making others sick.
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.
- Dishes can be done in dishwasher or with hot soapy water.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Have everyone in the household wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners* ([/h1n1flu/qa.htm#antibacterial](#)) are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

For more detailed information about novel H1N1 home care, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1 (<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1>) flu or call 1-800-CDC-INFO

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