



Shawnee County Health Agency
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H1N1 Flu (*H1N1 Flu*) -- What You Need To Know

What is the Current Kansas Situation?

H1N1 has been identified in numerous counties in Kansas. Shawnee County identified its' first case of H1N1 flu on June 23rd. Local health officials are following state investigation guidelines provided by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

What is this Disease?

This outbreak is a H1N1 Influenza Virus (H1N1), with a gene sequence that has not been seen before. Therefore, it is unlikely that any humans have natural immunity to the disease.

Influenza is spread primarily through droplets in the air and on surfaces from sneezing and coughing. The seasonal flu vaccine available is not believed to be useful in preventing this new virus.

The virus is treatable and at this time responsive to Tamiflu and Relenza. It is important NOT to use these treatments unless necessary as overuse will result in resistance to the medications.

What does it mean now that WHO has declared Pandemic Phase?

The WHO phases are based on geographical spread of a new influenza virus. It is important to note that this declaration **does not** mean that the disease is deadlier or more dangerous than before, just that it has spread to more countries.

Why did WHO move to Phase 6 if the virus severity is unchanged?

The move to Phase 6 is really an alert that the spread of H1N1 flu is now expected to traverse the globe and those nations where the virus has yet to arrive should expect to see cases and be prepared to respond.

How do you keep from getting the H1N1 Flu?

Wash your hands frequently. Viruses may remain alive on surfaces for two hours, so where others have been; surfaces may be contaminated with germs.

Cover your cough and sneeze. Use a facial tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze and then immediately wash your hands. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer.

If you are sick, stay home. Don't share your illness with your friends and neighbors. Stay home until you are symptom free for 24 hours.

Keep surfaces clean and disinfected. Don't share drinking cups, utensils and other personal items with others.

If someone is ill in your home, designate only one person to care for that person. Eliminating or reducing contact with others helps prevent the spread of disease.

If there is an outbreak in your community, avoid social gatherings.

Is there anything more individuals can do?

In addition to practicing good hygiene skills and staying healthy, you should also stay informed. You can find more information at the following websites:

www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/
www.H1N1fluks.org
www.snco.us/ha
www.hhs.gov
www.pandemicflu.gov

What are the Shawnee County Health Agency and other local health departments across the nation doing?

Health departments and medical providers across the state are *actively* looking for cases. Because we are looking, more cases will be found.

Health departments and hospitals have planned and prepared for emergencies such as this for several years. Our plans include:

- Surveillance for disease
- Public health information and education
- Social distancing measures if disease is confirmed
- Stockpiles supplies and ways to obtain more

Be vigilant with good hygiene (hand washing, covering your cough, etc.) and clean and disinfect surfaces daily or as often as needed.

More questions?

You may email questions to the local health department at epco@snco.us

You may call the local health department at 368-2000.

www.cdc.gov provides interim guidance for a variety of groups and organizations. We encourage you to review this information frequently for the most up-to-date information.