



## ***Guard against the novel H1N1 flu virus***

Flu season is here. Have you been vaccinated?

Each year in the United States, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized and about 36,000 people die from seasonal flu complications. The novel H1N1 flu is a new flu strain that is spreading worldwide among people, particularly school children and young adults.

Controlling the spread of H1N1 flu is everyone's responsibility. The Virginia Department of Health urges you to protect yourself, your family and the community against the H1N1 virus by taking these steps:

- ✓ Vaccinate children and yourself for seasonal flu early and be sure to also get the H1N1 flu vaccine when it becomes available.
- ✓ Wash your hands frequently and cover coughs and sneezes with a sleeve, elbow or tissue – not your hands. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- ✓ Stay home if you have flu symptoms such as fever, cough or sore throat. Don't return to work or school until you have been without a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine. Working parents should make plans for their children's care if they or their children should become ill with the H1N1 virus.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that the following groups of people receive the novel H1N1 flu vaccine when it first becomes available:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- Persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years old
- People 25 through 64 years of age who are at higher risk because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems

For more information about novel H1N1 flu, visit [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov) or call VDH's toll-free inquiry center at 1-877-ASK-VDH3 (1-877-275-8343) during business hours.

For more information about preparing your family for emergencies, visit [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov) or call 1-866-782-3470.

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