



YOUR HEALTH...YOUR CHOICE
Gold Choice

H1N1 Flu (Swine flu) has symptoms similar to the regular flu, including fever over 100 degrees, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, and chills. If you or your child has these symptoms, call your doctor. The H1N1 flu can be treated with anti-flu drugs. For more information, call the New York State Department of Health Hotline at 1-800-808-1987.

Important Information about H1N1 and Seasonal Flu

Two strains of flu, seasonal flu and the H1N1 (Swine) flu, are on everyone's minds this time of year.

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself from either the seasonal or the H1N1 flu. The two flu viruses require separate vaccinations (two shots).

Check with your doctor to see if you should have either a seasonal flu or H1N1 flu vaccination. Both vaccinations are covered by Gold Choice Care when you see your network provider. If you have trouble getting a vaccination, Gold Choice may be able to help. Please call Member Services at 1-888-419-1722.

People who should have the H1N1 influenza vaccine include:

- pregnant women
- household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age
- healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- Individuals from 6 months through 24 years of age (Children under nine years will require two doses)
- Individuals between the ages of 25-64 who have health conditions that would lead to higher risk of complications from the flu

Please note that limited quantities of the H1N1 vaccine are available now. Healthcare workers, pregnant women, and caregivers of children under 6 months

are the first groups to receive the vaccine. All doses are expected to be received by New York State by the end of October and will be available after that.

People who are at high risk for complications from Seasonal Flu should get a seasonal flu vaccine each year:

- children 6 months through 18 years of age
- pregnant women
- people 50 years of age and older
- people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities

People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from seasonal flu should also get a seasonal flu vaccine each year:

- household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu (see above)
- household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (the children are too young to be vaccinated)
- healthcare workers

In addition to getting the vaccine, to help protect yourself from getting the flu, here are some helpful tips:

- Wash your hands often - especially if you have had contact with someone who is sick, or if you have coughed or sneezed into your hands.
- Use of alcohol-based hand cleaners can also help. It must be rubbed on the hands and allowed to dry on its own.
- Covering your coughs and sneezes. It is best to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away and wash your hands.
- Keep your hands (and therefore, germs) away from your eyes, nose, mouth, and face.
- Whenever possible, stay away from those who are sick, and if you do get the flu, stay home in order to heal and to avoid exposing others and spreading the virus.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> and <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.