

- **Protect pregnant women:** Pregnant women should avoid being the primary caregiver of a sick child if possible.

Are the seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu vaccines safe for my child?

Yes. Children with high-risk medical conditions are among the most important groups to be vaccinated against seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu. This is because they are at higher risk of complications from the flu.

What types of vaccine should my child receive and how many doses?

There are two types of seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine available—the shot and the nasal spray. **High-risk children should receive the shot only.**

- **Children younger than 10** need two doses of the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine.
- **Children younger than 9** who are receiving the seasonal flu vaccine for the first time will need two doses of the seasonal vaccine. All other children should receive one dose of the vaccine.



How can I plan ahead with my child's school or child care?

- **Find out** your child's school or child care plan for flu season.
- **Let them know** your child is at high risk for complications.

What can I do if my child gets sick?

Call or take your child to the doctor if your child develops flu-like symptoms. The doctor may want to begin antiviral medications as quickly as possible.

When can my child go back to school or child care if she is sick?

- Generally, your child should stay home until she is **free of fever for at least 24 hours.**
- The fever should be gone **without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.**
- **A fever is** defined as 100° F / 37.8° C or greater.

**For more information, visit
www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov
 or call
 1-800-CDC-INFO**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 Flu:

For Parents Who Have Children Or Adolescents With High-Risk Medical Conditions

How do I know if my child is at high risk for complications from the flu?

Your child is at risk if he/she has:

- **Asthma**
- **Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions** including disorders of the brain; spinal cord; peripheral nerve; and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy (seizure disorders), stroke, intellectual disability (mental retardation), moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury
- **Chronic lung disease** (such as cystic fibrosis)
- **Heart disease** (such as congenital heart disease and congestive heart failure)
- **Blood disorders** (such as sickle cell disease)
- **Endocrine disorders** (such as diabetes mellitus)
- **Kidney disorders**
- **Liver disorders**
- **Metabolic disorders** (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
- **Weakened immune system** due to disease or medication (such as people with HIV or AIDS, cancer, or those on chronic steroids)
- **Receiving long-term aspirin therapy** for chronic disorders
- **Pregnancy**



What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by flu viruses. Flu infections usually result in mild illness, but can lead to hospital stays and, rarely, death. Each year several different flu viruses circulate. This year, one of the viruses is the new 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

What are symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Some people sick with the flu will not have a fever.

What is a flu complication?

A flu complication means severe illness (like pneumonia), hospitalization, or death.

How can I protect my child against flu?

- **Flu shots:** The most important thing is for your child to get both a seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine to protect against flu viruses.
- **Distance:** Keep your child away from people who are sick.
- **Hand washing:** Wash hands often with soap and running water (for as long as it takes to sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice). If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Assist your child in hand washing if he is unable.
- **Germ control:** Encourage your child to avoid touching his eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- **Cleanliness:** Keep bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters, and toys clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- **Health:** If your child is at risk, make sure her underlying condition is under the best control.
- **A plan:** Have a plan in case your child becomes sick with flu-like illness.



What should I do to take care of my sick child?

- **Doctors:** Contact your child’s doctor if you think he might have the flu. The doctor may want to begin antiviral medications as quickly as possible.
- **Home care:** Keep your child at home, except for doctor visits, until at least 24 hours after there is no longer a fever or signs of a fever. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- **Covering coughs:** Ensure that your child covers coughs and sneezes. Your child may need your assistance if she is unable.
- **Rest and fluids:** Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks clear fluids (water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants such as Pedialyte®) to keep from becoming dehydrated.
- **Medicines:** Ask your doctor about fever-reducing medicines based on your child’s age. Children younger than 4 years of age should not be given over-the-counter cold medications without approval from a health care provider. Aspirin should not be given to children or teenagers who have the flu; this can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye’s syndrome.
- **Sick room:** Keep your sick child in a separate room (a sick room) in the house as much as possible to limit contact with household members who are not sick. Consider designating one person as the main caregiver for the sick child.

