



Influenza

Most people with the flu are sick for about a week, but then feel better. However, some people can get very sick and some can die. Every year in the United States, on average, 20 to 30 million people get the seasonal flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related complications; and about 36,000 people die from flu-related complications, most often pneumonia.



There is a new and very different flu virus called H1N1 flu. This virus may cause more illness or more severe illness than is usual this flu season. The virus has caused illness ranging from mild to severe, including hospitalizations and deaths in adults and children. Many children have gotten 2009 H1N1 infection and there have been large outbreaks in some schools across the county. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with the flu. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5 days **after** becoming sick.

The symptoms of novel H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with novel H1N1 flu virus also have reported diarrhea and vomiting.