

# H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu), Pregnancy, and You

## Why should I know about this?

Pregnant women are more likely to become seriously ill if they catch the H1N1 flu. There are things you can do to keep yourself well. There are also things you can do to decrease the chances of getting very ill if you catch the flu.

## How can I stay well?

1. Wash your hands often and well. Use warm soapy water, hand gel or sanitizer. Pay special attention to washing in between your fingers, your fingertips, the backs of your hands and the base of your thumb.
2. Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Cough or sneeze into your arm if you do not have a tissue.
3. Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose or mouth.
4. Stay away from people who are ill. If someone at home is ill the best place for them to stay, as much as possible, is in their room.
5. Get vaccinated for both H1N1 flu and seasonal flu.

## How do I know if I have the flu?

### *You most likely have the flu if you:*

- have a cough and a fever over 38.5 degrees Celsius
- have a sore throat
- have muscle aches
- feel very tired

### *Sometimes people with H1N1 flu also:*

- feel sick to their stomach
- have diarrhea
- are sick to their stomach

## What should I do if I think I have the flu or get sick?

1. **Phone your care provider.** Call as soon as you **begin** to feel ill. Do not drop into the office without calling first. Your care provider may tell you to get some medicine and start to take it right away. This is very important to do. Have the number of a drug store near where you live so you can give it to your care provider when you call.
2. Have a friend or “flu buddy” help take care of you. This is someone who can also pick up the medicine from the drug store for you.
3. Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever.
4. Drink lots of fluids and rest.
5. Stay away from work or school for seven days after you began to feel ill.

### **Remember..**

- most women have mild symptoms and get better.
- calling your care provider right away and taking the medicine (antiviral) lessens the chances of becoming very ill.
- following these steps is taking good care of yourself and your baby.

Call HealthLink BC at 811 if you have questions.

If you think you have the flu call your careprovider.

Content source: BC Government Influenza Preparedness Fact Sheet: H1N1 Information for Pregnant Women, September 4, 09.

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