

My partner is feeling sick but I feel fine... Can I still come in to spend time with our baby?

Parents without symptoms are welcome to continue to spend time with their baby.

Can brothers and sisters visit?

- ▶ We recommend that brothers and sisters do not visit while their baby is sick with the flu. This will help prevent your children from catching the flu from your baby.
- ▶ Once your baby is recovered and symptom free brothers and sisters can visit as usual.
- ▶ Any brother or sister who has cold or flu symptoms must not visit. This includes sitting in the family lounge. Please do not bring sick children into the hospital unless you are bringing them for medical care.

What about our visitors?

Visitors with flu symptoms must not visit. During an outbreak of H1N1 Flu in the community there will be no visitors in the NICU. This includes brothers and sisters. Please ask your baby's nurse for more information.

Expressed Breast Milk

All mothers can continue to provide breast milk for their baby with good hand washing and normal pumping methods. If you have flu symptoms please arrange for someone to bring your breast milk in for your baby.

Breastfeeding and Skin to Skin

If your baby has already been breastfeeding and skin to skin cuddling; this may continue if your baby has the flu but it will depend on your baby's condition.

Things you can do to protect your baby and your family:

- ▶ Stay home if you are sick.
- ▶ Clean your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol based hand cleanser.
- ▶ Watch for information on the H1N1 vaccine.

If you have any questions regarding your baby please ask to speak to your baby's doctor.

For more information on H1N1 visit the BC Government H1N1 web page <http://www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1/> or Call HealthLink BC by dialing 8-1-1 and speak to a nurse day or night.

Neonatal Program

**Parent
Information:
H1N1 Flu
and
Your Baby.**

What is the H1N1 flu?

“Flu” or influenza is caused by viruses. H1N1 is a new flu virus. It is sometimes called the “swine flu”. The H1N1 flu can spread easily between people because most people have not had a chance to build “immunity” or “protection” from the H1N1 flu.

What are the symptoms of the H1N1 flu?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu are like the symptoms of seasonal flu and include

- ▶ a cough or “stomach” problems (nausea, vomiting and diarrhea) with fever plus
- ▶ Joint or muscle pain, extreme tiredness, weakness, headache, and sore throat and sometimes breathing problems.
- ▶ Symptoms can be very mild to severe.

How is the H1N1 flu spread?

H1N1 flu is spread on droplets when people with the H1N1 flu cough and sneeze. H1N1 flu gets into your body through your nose, mouth, eyes and when you breathe. The H1N1 flu virus can live on door handles, counters, and tissues and be picked up on your hands and spread when you touch your mouth or nose.

How do you test my baby for the H1N1 flu?

A small amount of fluid will be collected from your baby’s nose using a suction catheter and sent to the lab. This is called an “NPW” or “nasal pharyngeal washing”. We will know within a few hours if your baby has the flu. It can take several days to know if your baby has the H1N1 flu.

Why did my baby get moved?

If we think your baby has the flu we will move your baby to a private room. Staff will need to wear a special mask, goggles, gown and gloves each time they enter your baby’s room to prevent spreading the flu to other babies, families and staff. We will keep giving your baby the best care and treatment. If several babies have the flu we would move these babies into the same room. This is called “a cohort” room.

Do parents need to wear gowns, masks and gloves?

Wearing a gown, mask and gloves will decrease your chances of catching the flu from your baby and passing it on to others. Some parents may choose not to wear protective clothing when spending time with their baby. We cannot stress enough the need for excellent hand washing and frequent use of gel hand cleanser to help prevent spreading the flu.

How long will my baby stay in the private room?

Most babies with the flu will stay in a private room for 7 days from the time they have symptoms. This may vary from baby to baby and will be decided by Infection Control and the NICU Team.

What is Tamiflu? Will my baby get this medicine?

Tami-flu is “anti-viral” medicine that may be used to help treat people with the H1N1 flu. Not all babies will be given Tamiflu. Your doctor will let you know the best treatment plan for your baby.

Parenting Time

If I have flu symptoms can we still come to spend time with our baby?

- ▶ **Stay home if you have flu symptoms.** Please do not come to the nursery.
- ▶ Parents who have been treated with “Tamiflu” can return to the NICU after a full 48 hours of treatment if they are feeling better. Parents not treated with Tamiflu must stay at home for 7 days from the beginning of the flu symptoms.
- ▶ If both parents get the flu please arrange for a relative or friend to visit your baby, until you are well. Please make sure that you add this person to your visitors list at the front desk.