



Minidoka Memorial Hospital

*"Quality Care For All"*

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**H1N1 Rarely Requires Hospital Care**

Reports of flu-like illness are on the increase across the nation and in Idaho. Most people suffering from the flu don't need to see a doctor and will recover completely with proper care at home. Your local healthcare providers urge community members to arm themselves with information, stay home if they become ill, and visit their physician or an emergency department **only** if you have severe complications such as listed below.

"The best thing to do when you're ill with the flu is stay home," said Mary Jensen, Program Manager for Communicable Disease Control at the South Central Public Health District, "Isolate yourself from others so you don't spread the illness. And stay home for a full 24 hours after your fever is gone."

In the interest of protecting public health and reducing the strain on hospital emergency departments, health professionals are urging schools and employers **not** to require a doctor's note for absences due to flu-like illness.

However, some people are more likely to get flu complications and they should call their health care provider about whether they need to be examined if they get flu symptoms this season. These people include pregnant women, everyone between the ages of 6 months and 24

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years and people between the ages of 25 and 64 who have health problems such as asthma, diabetes, heart or lung disease or other conditions that weaken the immune system. These are the same people that are recommended for getting the H1N1 flu vaccine. In some cases, a doctor or other health care professional may prescribe anti-viral drugs to help treat the flu.

While most people recover from H1N1 without medical help, a call to the doctor is warranted when symptoms grow severe. In children, urgent medical care is needed when:

- They're breathing fast or having trouble breathing.
- Their skin is bluish or gray
- They're not drinking enough fluids
- They're having severe or persistent vomiting
- They're not waking up or interacting
- They're being so irritable they don't want to be held
- They have flu-like symptoms that improve and then return with fever and a worse cough.

Otherwise healthy adults should seek urgent medical attention when, in conjunction with other flu-like symptoms:

- They're having difficulty breathing
- They're having pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- They're suddenly dizzy or confused
- Their vomiting is persistent or severe
- Their flu-like symptoms improve but return with fever and a more severe cough.

Good hand hygiene and avoiding people who are sick will help keep you healthy during this unusual flu season. For most normal, healthy people rest and recovery at home is the best option. It frees up hospital space for those who are truly ill and helps contain the spread of disease by not furthering exposure to other illnesses.

For more information about H1N1 contact:

South Central Public Health District [www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)

South Central Public Health District H1N1 Flu Informational Hotline: 1-866-450-3594

US Department of Health & Human Services: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

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