



# H1N1 Checklist

The currently circulating influenza virus, known as H1N1, continues to infect numerous people around the world. Because it is difficult to contain the virus, it is up to individuals to do what they can to stay healthy and prevent the spread of illness. This checklist from your pharmacist will help you take steps to protect yourself and those around you.

## Stay Informed

- Visit credible websites, such as [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca) or [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) or speak with your pharmacist, doctor or other health-care professional for updated information on the pandemic situation and the H1N1 virus.
- Know the difference between H1N1, seasonal flu and a cold. H1N1 has similar symptoms to the seasonal flu, including cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose, headache and body aches. The H1N1 virus is a different type of flu virus than those which usually cause the seasonal flu. Colds are less likely to cause fever or body aches, and usually include nasal congestion.
- Keep in mind that the virus is spread in the same way as the seasonal flu virus – through droplets that are created when people cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can be transferred through person-to-person contact, in the air or by contact with contaminated surfaces.

## Prevent Illness

- Wash your hands frequently. Use warm, soapy water and wash for as long as it takes to sing the ABC song (i.e., 15 to 20 seconds).
- If there is no soap and running water close by, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands. Apply some of the sanitizer to your hands and be sure to rub your hands together until they are dry.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle that includes adequate sleep, drink plenty of fluids, enjoy healthy foods, and stay active.
- Keep your distance from individuals who appear to have influenza. You can help to minimize the spread of the infection by staying 2 metres away from others who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, mouth or nose.
- If you are ill, cough or sneeze into your arm or a tissue, rather than on your hand.
- Minimize your time spent in crowded settings whenever possible.
- Get your annual flu shot to protect against seasonal influenza. In Ontario, the flu shot is free for everyone. This flu shot will not protect you against the H1N1 virus, but it is effective at reducing illness due to the seasonal influenza virus. The vaccine to protect against H1N1 is currently under development.

## Work, School and Travel Tips

- Stay home from work or school if you have symptoms of influenza through the duration of your illness.
- Do not travel if you are ill with influenza symptoms.
- Carry an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with you if you are not close to a source of soap and running water to cleanse your hands frequently.

## Treating Illness

- If you or someone you are caring for experience symptoms of influenza contact your healthcare provider or call Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000).
- If you become ill with the flu, check with your health care professional to see what next steps you should take to treat your symptoms.
- Drink fluids and get plenty of rest when you are ill.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly and use proper cough/sneeze etiquette.
- Limit your contact with others as much as possible.
- Ask your pharmacist about over-the-counter products to help manage specific symptoms (e.g. acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever and body aches). You may wish to be proactive and keep some basic over-the-counter products at home to avoid trips to the pharmacy if you are ill.



**Speak with your pharmacist regularly for updated information about H1N1 and the availability of the vaccine.**