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When to Seek Medical Attention if your Child has the Flu

Many people are concerned about the novel H1N1 flu virus. The H1N1 flu virus is contagious and is spread from person-to-person just like the seasonal flu virus. The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus 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 have also reported diarrhea and vomiting.

Luckily, most people who have been sick with this virus in the U.S. have recovered at home without treatment. If your child has flu-like symptoms, please keep him/her at home for 24 hours after fevers resolve, unless given other instructions by your pediatrician.

Like seasonal flu, complications can occur with H1N1 flu. Seek emergency medical care if your child becomes ill and experiences any of the following **warning signs**:

- Fast breathing
- Trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not urinating as much as usual
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or interacting as usual
- Being so irritable that your child does not even want to be held
- Fever returns after being absent for a day, or a significant change in fever pattern occurs. For example, it was 101 degrees Fahrenheit for several days and now it's 103 degrees.

If your child has a flu-like illness, it is important that he/she does not expose other people in order to keep from spreading the illness.

There are some things that you can do to keep yourself and your child healthy:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. Put your used tissue in the waste basket.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with a flu-like illness, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.

If you'd like more information on H1N1 flu, please visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.