

Dear Community Services Participant:

The City of Irvine is taking a proactive approach to community education and preparing residents for, and preventing, the transmission of influenza (flu). The following information applies to the seasonal flu, as well as H1N1 (swine flu).

What is Influenza: There are different types of influenza, many with similar signs and symptoms. The most common form is the seasonal flu which typically lasts from October through May. This season, H1N1 will also be present. Unlike the seasonal flu, H1N1 can spread quickly because there is little natural immunity, and a vaccine will be in limited supply beginning mid-October.

Transmission: Germs are often spread when a person touches something contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth. People may become infected by touching surfaces such as doorknobs, desks or tables that an infected person has touched or may have sneezed or coughed on.

Signs and Symptoms: It will be difficult to determine who has H1N1 or seasonal flu. Signs and symptoms are similar and may include:

- Sudden fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C)
- Chills
- Muscle aches or pains
- Headache
- Feeling of weakness, tiredness and/or exhaustion
- Cough or sore throat
- Signs of dehydrations to include: decreased urine, dry mouth and eyes, dizziness, etc.
- Diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain (more common in children)

Preventing Transmission: The City's web site www.cityofirvine.org and the Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA) web site <http://ochealthinfo.com> post regular updates to educate the community about preventing the transmission of the flu.

Community Services Program Participants should:

- Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the used tissue in the trash.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also effective.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Routinely clean surfaces and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact (telephone, keyboard).
- Stay home from program activities if sick with the flu and limit contact with others. Program participants should remain away from activities for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever.

How can Community Services program participants prepare for the flu season?

- Get the seasonal flu vaccine. The City of Irvine web site (www.cityofirvine.org) lists local places to get a flu shot.
- Get the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine when it becomes available, if you are at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications. People at higher risk for 2009 H1N1 flu complications include pregnant women and people with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes) or compromised immune systems. For more information about priority groups for vaccinations, visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm.
- Make plans to care for sick household members or for children if schools dismiss students or child care programs close.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home. Have the following items on hand:
 - A supply of fever-reducing medicines that contain acetaminophen or ibuprofen
 - Alcohol based hand cleaners
 - Tissues
 - Other items that may be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick.
- Learn about the flu and what you can do. To find out more about preparing for the flu, go to www.flu.gov or call 1.800.CDC.INFO (1.800.232.4636).