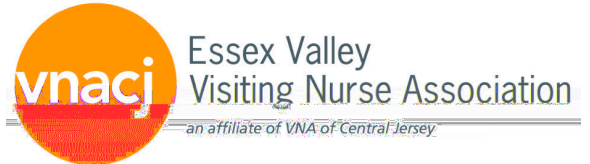




Ask Your Essex Valley VNA Nurse Common Questions About Seasonal and H1N1 Flu



Q: Why should people get vaccinated against the seasonal flu?

Seasonal flu affects people of any age and is a serious disease. On average, seasonal flu causes 36,000 flu-related deaths (mostly among those aged 65 years or older) and more than 200,000 flu-related hospitalizations each year in the United States.

The “seasonal flu season” in the United States is usually from November through April each year. An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and lessen the chance that you will transmit flu to others.

Q: Is H1N1 flu different from seasonal flu?

Yes, the H1N1 flu is a different virus than the seasonal flu and requires a different vaccine for protection. Sometimes referred to as ‘swine flu’ the H1N1 virus is not spread by food. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

Q: Will the seasonal flu vaccine also protect against H1N1 flu?

No, the seasonal flu vaccine is not expected to protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu.

Q: Is the new H1N1 flu vaccine considered safe?

The new H1N1 vaccine has been approved by the FDA and has been shown to be effective against this strain of flu. Healthy adults and children 10 and older will need only one dose of vaccine. H1N1 immunization is voluntary.

Q: What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?

H1N1 flu symptoms are similar to regular seasonal flu and can include:

- Fever, lack of energy, lack of appetite and coughing
- Runny nose, sore throat
- In addition, H1N1 symptoms may include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea

Q: Are there other ways to prevent the spread of illness?

- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. Cough into your shoulder or elbow or use a tissue. Throw tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

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