

## For People Who Have Influenza Symptoms

While most people who become infected with the new strain of influenza (H1N1) recover after a few days of experiencing relatively mild symptoms, it has been found that there is a risk of people who have underlying medical conditions becoming seriously ill if they become infected with this new virus.

People who believe they have influenza symptoms such as sudden fever, cough, sore throat, etc. or those who have been diagnosed by a doctor as having influenza are asked to cooperate in preventing the spread of the virus to other people.

The following information explains the process of how people who may be infected with influenza can get examined at a medical facility and how to recover at home and reduce the possibility of infecting other people.

Following all the advice given here does not necessarily mean that one can fully prevent spreading the infection to others. However, by doing one's best to carefully carry out the advice given, we believe you can help protect others from infection.

### **Q. Will one become seriously ill if infected by the new strain of influenza?**

**A. No. Most people recover after experiencing relatively mild symptoms.**

However, people who already have underlying medical conditions have a high risk of becoming seriously ill depending on how they are medically treated and how they look after themselves. To avoid becoming infected, people with the following medical conditions should take special care to do the following: wash hands regularly, gargle, avoid crowded places. Also, people who have close or regular contact with people with the following illnesses are asked to help keep these people from becoming infected:

- Chronic respiratory ailments
- Metabolic ailments such as diabetes, etc.
- Immunodeficiency caused by taking steroids, etc.
- Chronic heart ailments
- Renal (kidney) function disorder

It has also been reported that the following people are at risk of becoming seriously ill if they become infected with the new strain of influenza virus. These people need to take special care to prevent themselves from becoming infected, and those who have a family doctor should consult him/her on what to do if they become infected:

- Pregnant women
- Infants and small children
- Elderly people

**Q. Is it necessary to go to a hospital or clinic when you have a fever or cough?**

A. If the symptoms are relatively mild, wait for a while to check if they worsen or improve. However, those people mentioned above and those who are at risk of becoming seriously ill due to underlying medical conditions are recommended to consult a doctor as soon as possible.

However, if the following symptoms occur, even healthy people should receive a medical examination as soon as possible.

**Children:**

- Breathing becomes rapid and difficult
- Complexion is bad (child looks exhausted, pale, etc.)
- Continuous vomiting or diarrhea
- Restlessness, uninterested in playing, response is dull
- Symptoms continue and worsen

**Adults:**

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Continuous chest pain
- Continuous vomiting or diarrhea
- Fever continues for more than 3 days
- Symptoms continue and worsen

**Q. You need to go to a hospital or clinic. Which hospital or clinic should you go to ?**

A. Do you know the hospital or clinic hours and which entrance should be used for patients with a fever? If not, telephone the medical facility in advance to find out.

**◎For people who do not know which medical facilities treat patients with a fever:**

Call the “Fever Consultation (Hatsunetsu Sodan) Center” at your public health office and ask them which medical facility you should go to.

**◎For people who know a medical facility that treats patients with a fever:**

Telephone the hospital or clinic in advance to ask about examination hours for patients with a fever. Do not go to the hospital or clinic without making a telephone call in advance.

**◎For people who have chronic or serious ailments and have a family doctor:**

Telephone your family doctor and ask about examination hours. Do not go to the hospital or clinic without making a telephone call in advance.

**◎For pregnant women:**

Telephone your obstetrician and ask him/her to introduce you to a medical facility where you can receive an examination. Your obstetrician may provide information regarding your medical treatment to the doctor at the facility to which he/she has introduced you.

**◎For people with serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, feeling faint or dazed, etc.:**

Such people should be examined as soon as possible at a hospital or clinic that has inpatient facilities. If necessary, an ambulance should be called (Emergency No. 119). When doing this, be sure to inform the emergency service, etc. that the patient has influenza symptoms.

**Q. If you are treating yourself at home, what points should you note if you are living with other family members?**

A. It is very difficult to prevent infection of other family members living with you. However, it is important to try to prevent them from becoming infected.

**You the patient ...**

- Follow the rules of ‘Cough Etiquette’ (see the section below)
- Wash your hands thoroughly
- Take your medication as prescribed and until it is completely finished
- Be sure to be well hydrated and to get plentiful sleep

## **Family members living with the patient ...**

- Wash your hands thoroughly after you have been in contact with the patient
- If possible, try to spend your time in separate rooms from the patient
- Although wearing a mask does not completely prevent one from becoming infected, wearing a mask is recommended when in contact with the patient

※Dishes and clothes used by the patient can be disinfected adequately with normal washing and drying.

In particular, if family members living with the patient have underlying medical conditions or are pregnant, please take extra precautions to avoid infection, such as spending your time at home in separate rooms as much as possible. Also, please be sure to consult your family doctor, just in case. In some cases, the doctor may prescribe medicine to help prevent infection.

### **©Cough Etiquette**

#### **1. Keep your distance from people around you**

It is said that germ particles emitted when coughing and sneezing fly about 2 meters.

#### **2. When you cough or sneeze, turn your head away from other people and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, etc.**

Try not to let the germ particles from your cough or sneeze reach other people. If you are not wearing a mask, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, etc. Throw the used tissue into a trash can as soon as possible.

#### **3. Wash your hands if they have been used to cover a cough or sneeze**

If you have used your hands to cover a cough or sneeze, wash them carefully with soap.

#### **4. Wear a mask**

Wear a mask during the period you have a cough or sneeze. Do not leave used masks lying around. Throw them away in a trash can.

※As well as obeying the Cough Etiquette rules, to prevent people around you from becoming infected, it is important to wash your hands regularly. Wash your hands with soap for more than 15 seconds and dry them thoroughly with a clean towel or paper towel.

**Q. You are treating yourself at home. Your fever has gone. Is it okay to go outdoors?**

A. Although your fever has gone, the usual influenza virus is still infective, so there is the possibility of you infecting other people. The term required for the virus to become completely non-infective has not been verified and there seems to be large individual differences. You are asked to refrain from going outdoors for at least the period below:

→ **2 days after the fever has gone**

However, regarding the new strain of influenza that is spreading, it has been found from various surveys that the virus continues to be infective for a while even after the fever and other symptoms have gone.

Therefore, if you have been diagnosed as being infected with the new strain of influenza, or if any of the people around you are infected with the new strain of influenza, you are asked to refrain from going outdoors for the period below, even if your fever has gone away:

→ **7 days from the day after the symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, etc. appeared**

This leaflet was created based on the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's Homepage [*"Influenza ka na?" Shojo ga aru katagata e.*] (*For People Who Have Influenza Symptoms*)

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