



Preparing for the H1N1 Influenza Pandemic

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Seasonal flu is a respiratory illness caused by a virus.

- **Symptoms:** fever, coughing, sneezing, body aches, severe fatigue
- **At risk populations:** young children, elderly, pregnant women, those with chronic illnesses
- **Every year, on average:**
 - 5-20% of population gets the flu
 - 200,000 hospitalizations
 - 36,000 death



Pandemic Influenza is different from Seasonal Influenza.

Pandemic Flu	Seasonal Flu
Explosive global events in irregular intervals	Localized annual outbreaks
Caused by novel virus that people have had little or no exposure to	Caused by variations of known viruses that have circulated previously; many people have some immunity
No vaccine (or not immediately available)	Vaccines are easier to develop/readily available
Virus can be more virulent and pose a threat to healthy persons	Virus is less virulent; greatest threat to 'at-risk' populations

Pandemics of the 20th century.

1918 “Spanish Flu” (H5N1)

- 28% illness rate; 675,000 deaths in US (adjusted to 2007: ~2 million)
- Worldwide mortality: 50 million (2% of pop.)



1957-58 “Asian Flu” (H2N2)

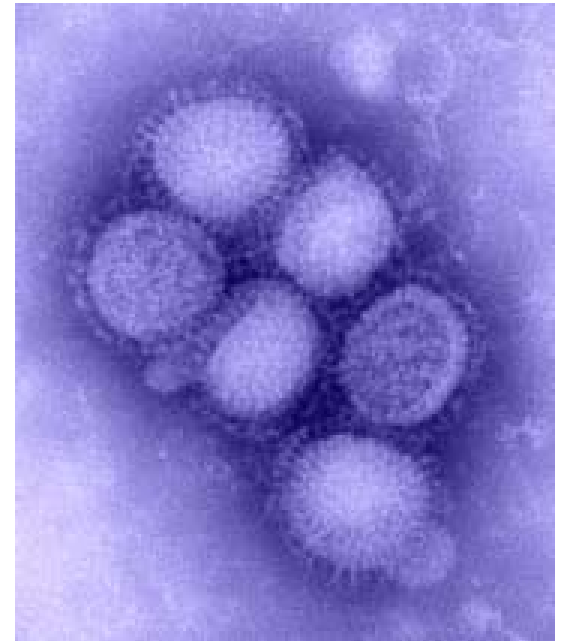
- 700,000 deaths in US; 1 million worldwide

1968-69 “Hong Kong Flu” (H3N2)

- 34,000 deaths in US; 700,000 worldwide

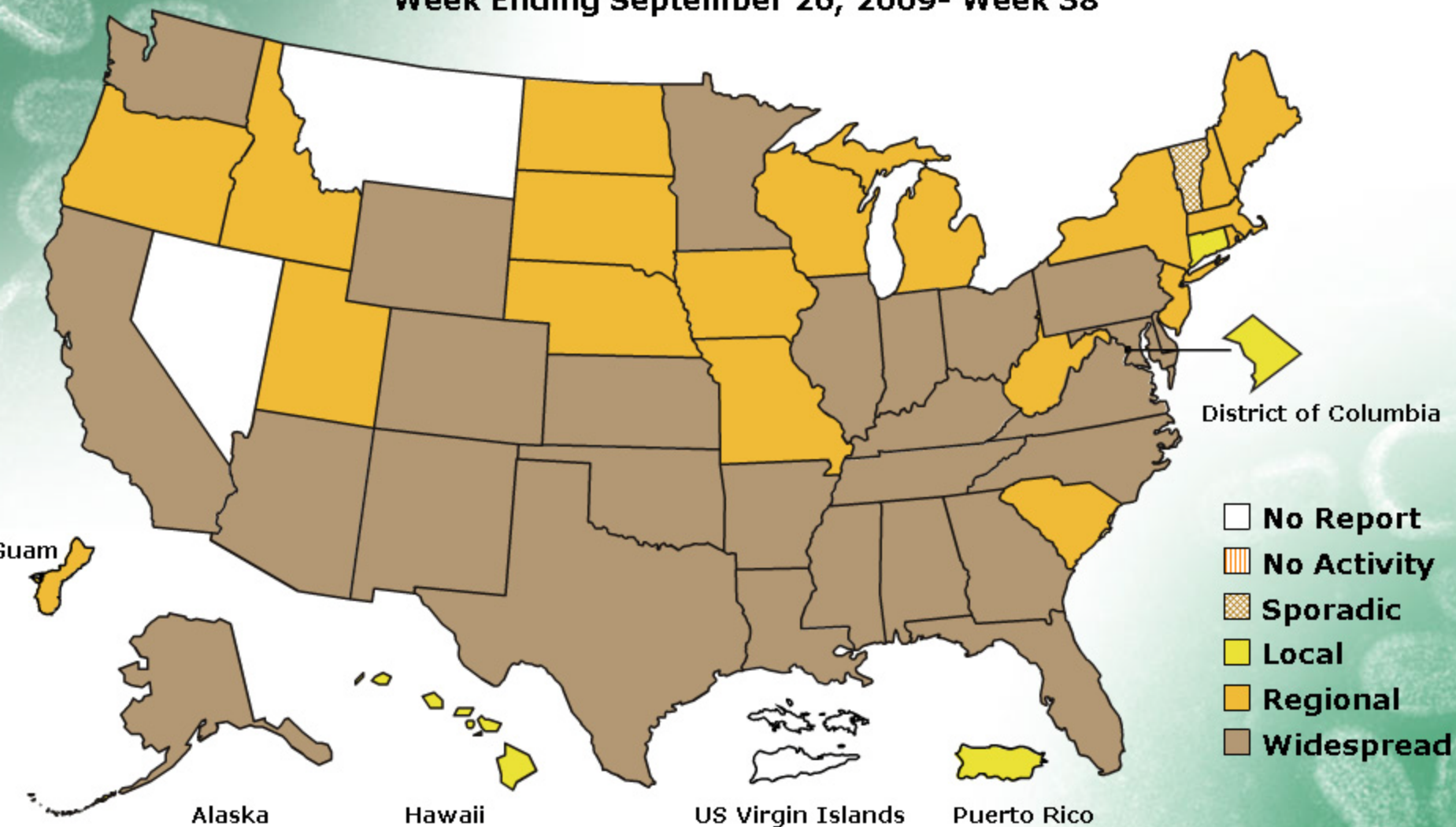
Novel H1N1 is a new influenza virus.

- **“Swine flu” is misnomer**
- **Can't be spread from pork or pork products**
- **Symptoms similar, but increased gastrointestinal symptoms**
- **Non-traditional vulnerability (young and healthy)**



Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report Prepared by the Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported by State and Territorial Epidemiologists*

Week Ending September 26, 2009- Week 38





H1N1 Incidence.

As of early October

US:

- **Hospitalization rate already exceeds traditional flu season rates**
- **2,321 deaths**

Texas:

- **481 hospitalizations; 87 deaths**

Travis County:

- **33 hospitalizations; 4 deaths**

Children and pregnant women are the most vulnerable.

Children (to age 18)

- 86 deaths
(as of early October)

Pregnant Women

- 100 women hospitalized in ICU
 - 28 deaths
(as of late August)

How flu is spread.

- **From saliva droplets**
 - Spread from coughing, sneezing, laughing, talking
- **Spread through air**
 - travels 3 – 6 feet
- **Transferred by hand**
 - Virus can live up to 48 hours on hard surfaces
 - Up to 12 hours on porous surfaces





Help slow the spread of H1N1.

- **Stay home when you're sick.**
 - **CDC recommends at least 24 hours after fever is gone, without use of fever-reducing medicine**
- **Stay away from sick people.**
 - **Stay at least six feet away if possible**
 - **Be aware during normal activities, such as work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings**



If you get sick.

- **Treat symptoms at home** with fever-reducing and cold & flu over-the-counter medications.
- **Rest and drink plenty of fluids.**
- **Contact your health care provider** if you are at risk for flu complications or have severe illness.



Contact your health care provider if your child:

- **Fast or trouble breathing**
- **Not drinking enough fluids**
- **Not waking up or not interacting**
- **Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough**



The emergency room is not for mild illness.

- **Do not go to the emergency room** unless you are very sick and have the emergency warning signs.
- If you go to the emergency room and are not sick with the flu, you may catch it from people who do have it.
- **Call your health care provider** if you are concerned about your illness.

Avoid getting and spreading the flu with basic hygiene.

- **Hand washing**
 - Vigorous scrubbing for 20 seconds
 - Hand sanitizers (make available throughout workplace)
- **New “cough etiquette”**
 - Cough and sneeze into your elbow/sleeve
- **Avoid touching face**
- **Use disinfecting wipes to clean commonly touched surfaces**



Get Vaccinated!

Seasonal Flu Vaccine

- Available now throughout community (running low)

H1N1 Vaccine

- Available late October at ATCHHSD clinics and other sites giving seasonal flu vaccine—**FREE**
- Priority groups: pregnant women; persons 6 months to 24 years; healthcare and EMS personnel; caregivers of children younger than 6 months; ages 25-64 years with health conditions



H1N1 Vaccines are as safe as Seasonal Flu vaccines.

- Same manufacturers
- Made in the same way
- Same safety testing procedures

Be prepared to stay home.

To avoid need to make trips out in public while sick and contagious:

- Stockpile food, water, over-the-counter and prescription medicines, tissues, pet supplies, personal hygiene items, etc.
- Create disaster supply kit—manual can opener, flashlight, etc.

Planning for Flu Season

- Two possible scenarios:
 - Current level of severity of illness or
 - More severe outbreak
- Expect increased absenteeism even at current levels (seasonal + H1N1)
- Implement flu prevention strategies now

Stay Informed: Pandemic Flu Resources

City of Austin

www.cityofaustin.org/health

www.cityofaustin.org/pandemicflu

State Department of State Health Services

www.texasflu.org

National Centers for Disease Control

www.flu.gov



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