

Which patients should be tested for novel influenza A (H1N1) virus (adapted from www.cdc.gov)

Not all people with suspected novel influenza (H1N1) infection need to have the diagnosis confirmed, especially if the person resides in an affected area or if the illness is mild. Recommendations on who to test may differ by state or community.

Testing is prioritized to include infants and children who require hospitalization or who are at risk for severe disease due to age less than 5 years, with emphasis on those under 2 years of age who are normally at risk for more severe influenza, or the presence of a medical condition which increases the risk for severe disease and complications.

Treatment is Available for Those Who Are Seriously Ill (adapted from www.cdc.gov)

It is expected that most people will recover without needing medical care.

If you have severe illness or you are at high risk for flu complications, contact your health care provider or seek medical care. Your health care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed. Be aware that if the flu becomes wide spread, there will be little need to continue testing people, so your health care provider may decide not to test for the flu virus.

The priority use for influenza antiviral drugs during this outbreak is to treat severe influenza illness, including people who are hospitalized or sick people who are considered at high risk of serious influenza-related complications.

Clinical judgment is an important factor in treatment decisions. Persons with suspected novel H1N1 influenza who present with an uncomplicated febrile illness typically do not require treatment unless they are at higher risk for influenza complications, and in areas with limited antiviral medication availability, local public health authorities might provide additional guidance about prioritizing treatment within groups at higher risk for infection.

Note: Aspirin or aspirin-containing products (e.g. bismuth subsalicylate – Pepto Bismol) should not be administered to any confirmed or suspected ill case of novel influenza A (H1N1) virus infection aged 18 years old and younger due to the risk of Reye syndrome. For relief of fever, other anti-pyretic medications are recommended such as acetaminophen or non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. For more information about Reye's syndrome, visit the [National Institute of Health website](http://www.nih.gov).