



North Central District Health Department

Proudly Serving the Counties of:
Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce and Rock

Important Health Alert:

What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by influenza viruses. Flu viruses cause illness, hospital stays and deaths in the United States each year. There are many different flu viruses and sometimes a new virus emerges to make people sick.

What is novel H1N1 flu?

Novel H1N1 flu is a new and very different influenza virus that is spreading worldwide among people. This new virus was called “swine flu” at first because it has pieces of flu viruses found in pigs in the past. However, novel H1N1 virus has not been detected in U.S. pigs.

Influenza is unpredictable, but scientists believe that the new H1N1 virus will cause illness, hospital stays and deaths in the United States over the coming months. This flu season, the new virus may cause a lot more people to get sick than during a regular flu season. It may also cause more hospital stays and deaths than seasonal flu.

How serious is the flu?

The flu can be very serious, especially for younger children and children of any age who have one or more chronic medical conditions. These conditions include asthma or other lung problems, diabetes, weakened immune systems, kidney disease, heart problems and neurological and neuromuscular disorders. These conditions can result in more severe illness from influenza, including the new H1N1 virus.

How does flu spread?

Both novel H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with influenza. People may also get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are the symptoms of flu?

Symptoms of seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea.

Is there a vaccine to protect my child from H1N1 flu?

A vaccine against novel H1N1 flu is being produced and will be available in the coming months as an option for the prevention of the new H1N1 flu. A vaccine against seasonal flu is available or will be soon, contact your health care provider for information. More information about the new H1N1 vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine is available on the NCDHD website at www.ncdhd.ne.gov and information will continue to be sent to the schools for distribution regarding the new vaccine.

422 East Douglas Street • O’Neill, Nebraska 68763

Phone: 402.336.2406 • Toll Free: 877.336.2406 • Fax: 402.336.1768 • Web site: www.ncdhd.ne.gov



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