



Charlie Crist  
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.  
State Surgeon General

## News Release

Contact: Jennifer James-Mesloh  
Email: Jennifer\_James-Mesloh@doh.state.fl.us  
Phone: (239) 332-9561 - office  
Phone: (850) 519-5728 - cell

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Flu Season Is Here** **- H1N1 (Swine Flu) Informational Update -**

**Fort Myers, FL** – Lee County is experiencing widespread influenza activity which mirrors levels seen in at least six other states. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported Florida is one of six other states that are experiencing widespread influenza illness.

“This level of influenza activity is unique for this time of year since it is typically only experienced during the peak influenza period of the winter months. Nationally as well as locally, the trend appears to be affecting primarily children, adolescents and adults with only minimal impact on the elderly population,” said Judith Hartner, M.D., M.P.H., M.P.A., Director of the Lee County Health Department.

Approximately 97% of all influenza viruses currently circulating in the United States are pandemic H1N1 viruses, therefore, routine testing of individuals who present to providers with influenza-like illness is not recommended. In addition, since local health departments no longer track individual cases of H1N1 (Swine Flu) as per guidelines set forth by the CDC earlier this year, the Lee County Health Department does not suggest notices be sent by schools, businesses, parks, or private organizations whenever they hear someone has the "Swine Flu".

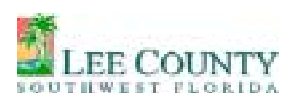
For most healthy children, adolescents, and adults with uncomplicated influenza-like illness antiviral medications are not needed. However, pregnant women, persons under 5 years of age, or those with chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, metabolic conditions, neurological or neuromuscular disorders and those who have chronic medical conditions they should contact their doctor immediately if they develop flu-like symptoms since they are at a higher risk for severe complications.

People can be proactive by washing their hands, covering their cough with a sleeve or tissue, and remaining home if they are sick until they are fever free for 24 hours, and without persistent cough. In addition, as further protection, getting the seasonal flu and pneumonia vaccine, as well as the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available will assist in protecting you, your family and community.

- more -



Judith A. Hartner, M.D., M.P.H. • Director  
3920 Michigan Avenue • Fort Myers, FL • 33916  
www.leechd.com



For more information on influenza activity there are a number of resources available such as the Florida Department of Health toll-free number which provides public health information and updates on H1N1 Swine flu. The information line is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EDT, seven days a week. Information is available in English, Spanish and Creole. The Florida Flu Information Line is 1-877-352-3581.

For web-based information please visit any of the following websites:

Lee County Health Department, [www.leechd.com](http://www.leechd.com)

Florida Department of Health, <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/DEMO/php/FluInfo.htm>

My Safe Florida, [www.myflusafety.com](http://www.myflusafety.com)

The Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

The World Health Organization, (WHO), <http://www.who.int/en/>

Flu.gov, <http://www.flu.gov/>

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