



## H1N1 (Swine Flu) and the Faith Community

*Have you thought about the impact of H1N1 on your faith community?*

If not now is the time to do so.

H1N1 (also referred to as "pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus" or "swine flu") is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something (such as a surface or object) with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

The risk of transmitting the flu virus from person to person is high within the faith community. People greet each other with handshakes and hugs, children and babies are passed from person to person, child care is provided and youth programs flourish.

Things to consider:

### **General**

- Creating a task force to address flu preparation
- Posting signs on hand washing in kitchens, bathrooms and food preparation areas
- Providing alcohol based hand sanitizers throughout the facility
- Providing education and educational materials on self care, hand hygiene and cough etiquette

### **Child Care, Sunday School, Youth Group**

- Policy surrounding sick children related to when to stay home and for how long
- Policy surrounding ill adult volunteers and teachers
- Policy surrounding the cleaning of toys, surfaces, and other objects

### **Worship**

- Plan for providing alternative spiritual care for those who cannot attend worship or other functions
- Placement of alcohol based hand sanitizers through out the worship facility
- Consider changing communion practices
- Consider encouraging the passing of the peace with words and smiles and minimal physical contact

## **Additional Resources**

### **General Information**

Stanislaus County: <http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/index.shtm>  
CA Dept of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/pages/swineinfluenza.aspx>  
CDC: [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general\\_info.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm)  
Flu.gov:  
H1N1 Flu: A Guide for Community and Faith-based Organizations  
<http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/cfboguidance.html>  
Faith-Based & Community Organizations Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Checklist  
<http://www.flu.gov/professional/community/faithcomchecklist.html>

### **Child Care, School, and Youth Related Resources**

CA Dept of Public Health – Schools/Child Care:  
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenzaSchools.aspx>  
CDC Schools: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools/>  
CDC Child Care: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/childcare/index.htm>

### **Employers**

CA Dept of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenzaEmployers.aspx>

### **Educational Materials**

“Where is the Flu Virus Hiding?”:  
<http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/pdf/where-flu-hides.pdf>  
“Flu Prevention”: <http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/pdf/swine-flu-poster.pdf>  
“Cover Your Cough”: <http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/pdf/cover-your-cough.pdf>  
“Self Care”  
English: <http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/pdf/H1N1-self-care-english.pdf>  
Spanish: <http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/pdf/H1N1-self-care-spanish.pdf>  
“H1N1 and You”: [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pdf/2009\\_h1n1fluandyou.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pdf/2009_h1n1fluandyou.pdf)

### **A Sample of Faith Based Resources**

North American Mission Board:  
[http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.1761077/k.6230/Pandemic\\_Flu\\_Preparedness.htm](http://www.namb.net/site/c.9qKILUOzEpH/b.1761077/k.6230/Pandemic_Flu_Preparedness.htm)  
United States Council of Bishops: <http://usccb.org/liturgy/swineflu.shtml>  
United Methodist General Board of Discipleship:  
[http://www.gbod.org/worship/worship/articles.asp?act=reader&item\\_id=7908&loc\\_id=9,10,27](http://www.gbod.org/worship/worship/articles.asp?act=reader&item_id=7908&loc_id=9,10,27)  
United Methodist Committee on Relief:  
<http://new.gbom-umc.org/umcor/newsroom/releases/archives09/waystopreventswineflu/>  
Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod: <http://www.lcms.org/ca/worldrelief/dnews/> (scroll to Flu Outbreak Impact)  
Holy Communion and Concerns about Infection:  
[http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item\\_id=3142](http://www.gbod.org/worship/default.asp?act=reader&item_id=3142)  
The Muslim Council of Britain: <http://www.mcb.org.uk/uploads/MCBSwineFluAdvice1.pdf>

### **References:**

<http://www.stanemergency.com/content/diseases/swine-flu/index.shtm>  
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenzaPublic.aspx>