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**Health Alert**  
**August 13, 2009**  
**Pandemic (H1N1) 2009**

**Current Situation**

The future behavior of the Pandemic H1N1 flu virus remains uncertain: it could worsen in severity and its rate of spread could increase. Vaccine is expected to be available in late fall or winter 2009. The fall and winter will likely bring more illness, which may overburden hospitals and health care providers. Our planning efforts now focus on vaccine distribution, public information, and health care “surge” capacity.

**Updates**

- The CDC reported that it assessed several rapid influenza diagnostic tests and found they had low sensitivity (40-69%). Thus a positive test can guide treatment, but a negative test does not exclude a novel H1N1 infection.
- The CDC now recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100°F/37.8°C), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. This guidance does not apply to healthcare settings where the exclusion period should be continued for 7 days from symptom onset or until resolution of symptoms, whichever is longer.

**Guidelines**

The CDC and the CDPH have published the following **new** information and guidelines in the past few weeks.

- CDC –Home Care Guidance: Physician Directions to Patient/Parent (7/16/09)
- CDPH – Health Alert Update (7/16/09)
- CDC – Novel H1N1 Influenza Vaccine (7/20/09)
- CDPH – Health Alert Update for Healthcare Providers and Clinicians (7/22/09)
- CDC – CDC Novel H1N1 Vaccination Planning Q&A (7/24/09)
- CDC –Managing Calls and Call Centers during a Large-Scale Influenza Outbreak: Implementation Tool (7/30/09)
- CDPH – Novel H1N1 Vaccination Recommendations ((7/30/09)
- CDC-Preparing for Vaccination with Novel H1N1 Vaccine (7/31/09)
- CDC-Recommendations for the Amount of Time Persons with Influenza-Like Illness Should Stay Away from Others (8/5/09)
- CDC-Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use to Reduce H1N1 Virus Transmission (8/5/09)

**Treatment**

Studies of treatment have indicated benefit, including reduction in mortality or hospitalization, even for patients whose treatment was started > 48 hours after illness onset. High risk or severely ill patients should receive antiviral treatment **regardless of the length of time since illness onset.**

**Since the situation may change, your best sources for information are:**

- Center for Disease Control (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH): <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/>
- City of Berkeley Public Health Division: <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/publichealth>

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