

GOOD HEALTH HABITS CAN HELP STOP GERMS

The swine flu (H1N1) outbreak in the United States has been in the news. Preventive measures should be taken to help stop the virus from spreading. Symptoms of the virus include runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, coughing, and lack of appetite. If you suspect your child has the influenza virus, call your doctor. Antiviral medications can shorten the duration of the illness if started soon after the onset. These medications are effective against the swine flu (H1N1) virus. The virus can spread by coughing, sneezing and unclean hands. Good hygiene is important to help prevent the spread of germs.

1. Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, public gatherings, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

3. Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.