

7 February 2014 - WHO has recently been notified by the Ministry of Health and Population, Egypt, of an increase in seasonal influenza activity. In some governorates, severe respiratory illnesses have been reported, of which a few were laboratory confirmed as influenza A (H1N1) pdm 2009. To date, 25 deaths associated with influenza have been reported in Egypt since December 2013.

This type of seasonal influenza pattern has been observed in many other countries of the Region, as well as globally.

WHO is working closely with the Ministry of Health and Population in Egypt to continuously assess and monitor the situation and provide technical support and guidance on appropriate public health measures to mitigate the current situation.

The influenza A (H1N1) pdm 2009 virus first emerged as a new virus that was responsible for pandemic influenza in 2009. WHO declared the end of the pandemic influenza in August 2010. Since then this virus has been circulating in humans as seasonal influenza virus. Seasonal influenza viruses can cause from mild to severe illness, including deaths among a number of hospitalized patients.

The elderly, young children under 5 years of age, pregnant women and people with underlying chronic health conditions are at higher risk of severe complication.

To prevent the spread of the disease, people who are ill should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and wash their hands regularly, stay home when they are unwell, and keep some distance of more than one metre from healthy people, as much as possible.

WHO recommends vaccination against seasonal influenza every year to prevent severe illness. The currently available seasonal influenza vaccine is protective against the circulating flu viruses, including influenza A (H1N1) pdm 2009.

People should seek medical care if they experience shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing, or if the fever continues for more than three to five days. For young children who are ill, parents should seek medical care if the child has fast or difficult breathing, continuing fever or convulsions. In most cases resting at home through the duration of symptoms, drinking plenty of fluids, and using pain reliever for aches and pain is adequate for recovery.

### **Related links**

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[Seasonal influenza factsheet](#)

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[Guidance on prevention of seasonal influenza](#)

Saturday 17th of May 2025 11:58:04 PM