

H1N1.....

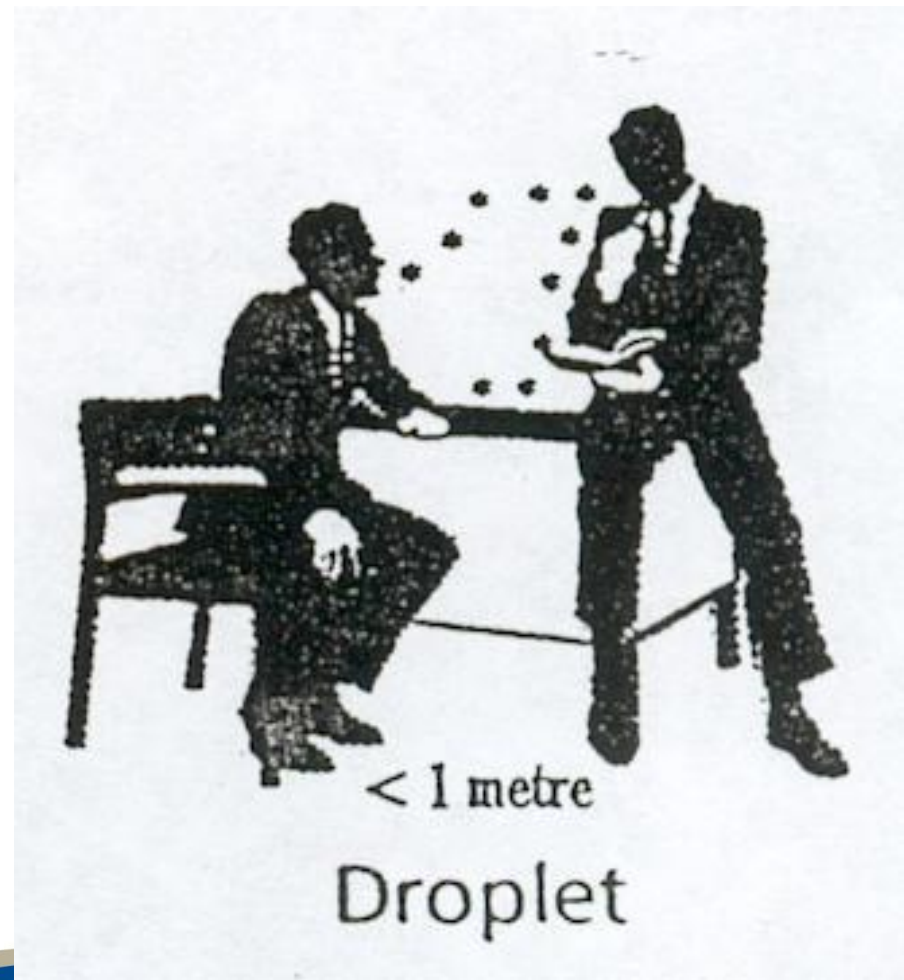
What's the big deal and what can we do about it?

H1 N1 School Presentation
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
September 2009



What is Influenza?

- Influenza is a potentially severe respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus
- It spreads easily from person to person through coughing and sneezing within 2 metres, or through contact with unwashed hands
- Indirect transmission can occur by contact with surfaces and objects that are contaminated with the virus – Eg tables, door knobs, computers etc.



Symptoms of Influenza

- Fever (>38 C)
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle and joint aches



What's the difference between Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Flu?

Seasonal

Annual/predictable

“Typical” flu symptoms

Immunity through exposure

Healthy adults generally not at risk

Annual vaccine available

Mild individual & societal impact

Pandemic

Rare

Severe/complications more frequent

No previous exposure

Healthy people of all ages at risk

Vaccine not available in early stages

Potential for severe disruption – up to 35% of population could be affected



Is H1N1 a Pandemic?

- H1N1 flu virus has been reported around the world, and the [World Health Organization](#) has declared it a pandemic influenza virus
- The majority of people who have become ill with H1N1 have not required hospitalization
- Flu viruses change over time. It is difficult to say if the current outbreak will stop, or will continue
- Health officials are monitoring the situation and plans for pandemic and emergency responses are ready

PREVENTION is key!



Key Messages to Teach Children to reduce the Spread of Influenza

- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer
- Cover your nose and mouth if you cough or sneeze
- Stay home if you are sick



Hand Washing

The single most effective way to stop the spread of germs!!

- Before eating food (lunch or snacks)
- After recesses
- After using the toilet
- After wiping, blowing or touching your nose
- After coughing or sneezing into your hands (it is better to cough or sneeze into your sleeve)



How To Wash Your Hands

- Wet your hands with plain water (modern soaps can be used with cold or warm water)
- Add soap and rub hands together for 15 seconds to create a good lather (the time it takes to sing the A,B,C's)
- Scrub all over both sides of your hands, between your fingers, and under your fingernails
- Rinse your hands and dry them well
- Hand rubs (hand gels and sanitizers) can also be used



Hand rubs

- Use of hand rubs by children has been shown to reduce sickness at school
- Rubs with benzalkonium chloride (instead of alcohol) are an effective alternate for school settings
- Hand rubs should NOT be used if dirt can be seen - then soap and water must be used
- Children should not ingest any hand gels
- If using alcohol rubs, they must be supervised and hands completely dry before touching anything, especially hand-to-mouth contact



Cough Etiquette

- Cover your cough or sneeze
- Discard tissues in waste baskets and practice hand hygiene after
- If no tissues are available, cough into your upper sleeve
- Keep common surface areas clean and disinfected (doorknobs, keyboards, phones etc...)



Environmental Cleaning

- Influenza viruses can live on surfaces for several hours to days
- Cleaning of objects and surfaces that are frequently touched by multiple students or staff, will help to prevent the transmission of the influenza virus from person to person through contaminated hands
- No special disinfectants or waste handling practices are required; regular cleaning products are sufficient, and waste handling would be according to usual standards
- Schools are advised to increase the frequency of cleaning during school hours (at least twice daily) and to monitor hand cleaning supplies
- All sinks in washrooms, kitchens and classrooms should be well stocked with hand washing supplies at all times. (i.e., soap and paper towels)



Stay Home if Sick

- Children and staff should stay home if they have symptoms of influenza, even if they do not feel very sick
- Children who become ill at school should be isolated in a room/area separate from other children until they can go home
- Notify public health of rates of absenteeism $> 10\%$ above baseline rates, due to influenza
- Children should stay home until feeling completely better



Contact Information

- PHN Name
- Number
- Address



Questions?

