

**27.8.2009**  
**City of Jyväskylä**

### **Information about the influenza A(H1N1) virus (swine flu)**

During the latter part of the summer and in the autumn, a considerable amount of people will get the disease caused by the influenza A(H1N1) virus.

The incubation period of influenza is usually two to three days, but can range from one to seven days. People who have fallen ill with influenza are carriers already 24 hours before their symptoms appear, and throughout the entire duration of the illness.

Influenza is an illness which starts suddenly, and whose symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, as well as muscle and joint pain. Patients must stay home and not go to work, to study, or to places where there are other people. Patients must not go to the healthcare centre or to see the on-call doctor without calling first. This is the best way to prevent the illness from spreading. The influenza A(H1N1) disease has characteristics similar to a normal seasonal influenza, but certain groups are at a higher risk than usual with this disease:

- pregnant women
- people with a heart condition (not a minor case of high blood pressure) requiring regular medication, asthma and diabetes patients, or those suffering from liver or kidney insufficiency, or an immunity-weakening disease
- considerably overweight people.

### **“Swine influenza” recovery**

Those who have mild symptoms and do not belong to the risk groups will recover from the illness within a week by resting at home. The recommended treatment is to take over-the-counter medication that lowers the fever, drink a lot of liquid and to rest. Usually, a medical examination, diagnosis and medical care are not required. The person can return to their everyday routines once he or she has been feverless and otherwise without symptoms for at least 24 hours after the illness. No special arrangements are required for family members who do not have any symptoms.

If the patient belongs to a risk group, or his or her general condition is poor, the need for treatment must be assessed.

The telephone is always the first method to contact healthcare. On weekdays, the telephone call should be made to the healthcare centre; in the evenings and weekends, telephone calls should be made to the on-call number of the primary health care unit of the Central Finland Central Hospital. The healthcare centre assesses the need for special care. Medical care is only prescribed for those with severe symptoms and, when required, for those who belong to risk groups. Conducting laboratory studies to diagnose the illness has been restricted to only those who require hospital care, and through separate consideration, to those who belong to a high-risk group of the influenza.

### **General hygiene instructions for preventing airborne infections**

1. Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues immediately into the trash.

2. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
3. Immediately after coughing or sneezing, wash your hands with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand cleansers.
4. Always wash your hands when you come home, and before you start eating.