



WRHA H1N1 INFLUENZA A OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS

JUNE 11, 2009

Transmission of Influenza:

Droplet/contact and may be airborne during aerosol-generating procedures.

- All health care workers working with patients who have respiratory symptoms and where a diagnosis of influenza is being considered should wear appropriate PPE as outlined in the WRHA infection control manual.

Occupational Exposure to H1N1 is defined as a susceptible health care worker who has **unprotected** exposure in the course of their work to a patient during the period of communicability **who** has a Probable or Confirmed case of H1N1 as defined below.

Unprotected exposure is defined as a health care worker who:

- **was not wearing a surgical mask** and was within 1 to 2 meters of a Probable or Confirmed patient who was coughing.
- **was not wearing N95 respirator** and was present in the patient's bed space while aerosols of respiratory secretions were created during aerosol-generating procedures.
- **was not wearing eye protection** and experienced a spray of patient's respiratory secretions directly into the eye. For example: tracheotomy tube secretions splashed in eye.

Period of communicability is defined as 1 day before the onset of symptoms until 7 days after the onset of symptoms or until resolution of symptoms, whichever is greater.

Probable or Confirmed case of H1N1 Influenza A:

- **Probable H1N1**
Laboratory result of Influenza A – pending H1N1 confirmatory results
- **Confirmed H1N1**
Laboratory confirmation of H1N1 Influenza A

Prophylaxis:

Prophylaxis will be considered for individuals who meet the criteria above. Prophylaxis with antiviral **medication** is optimally given within 96 hours (4 days) of an unprotected exposure but may be considered up to 7 days.

Reporting Exposures:

Occupational Health will follow health care workers who report an exposure to an index patient who is diagnosed as a Probable or Confirmed case of H1N1 Influenza A.

- **If Exposure occurs Monday – Friday 0800-1600 hrs:**

Call the site Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health (OESH) unit for follow up of exposed workers.

- **If Exposure occurs after office hours or during weekends:**

If the exposed health care worker cannot be seen in the site occupational health unit within 4 days, he /she should be seen and documented as an outpatient in the Emergency/Urgent Care Department and be given a prescription for prophylaxis. The health care worker should be referred for follow up by OESH on the next business day.