

Greater Cincinnati **Health Council**

If it involves health,
we're involved.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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H1N1 Testing Limited to Hospitalized Patients with Flu-like Symptoms

Got the flu? Is it a seasonal influenza or the notorious H1N1 strain beginning to make its way through Greater Cincinnati? For those questioning whether to go to the hospital or stay home, take note:

- 1) **Greater Cincinnati hospitals ARE NOT administering tests for H1N1 through their Emergency Departments.** Therefore, area hospitals cannot comply with Emergency Department patient requests for H1N1 tests. "Hospitals will perform testing for H1N1 based on the criteria set by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)," says Tonda Francis, RN, MSN, vice president of the Greater Cincinnati Health Council. "Hospitals must adhere to the CDC guidelines, as the state will only process tests for patients who meet the CDC criteria." According to Francis, Emergency Department patients do not meet the criteria for testing. "Only patients with influenza-like illness who are hospitalized will be tested for H1N1." Francis adds, "The only exception to the testing protocol may be requests from local or state health departments to test individuals who are part of a group or cluster that is at high-risk."
- 2) **Always monitor flu symptoms, regardless of the type of flu suspected, and recognize when those symptoms become severe enough to warrant a trip to a hospital Emergency Department:**

In children, emergency warning signs that requiring urgent medical attention include:

- Rapid or troubled breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Lack of fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Inability to wake up or interact
- Irritability and lack of desire to be held
- Flu-like symptoms that improve, but then return with a fever and worse cough

In adults, emergency warning signs that requiring urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

For [more information about the H1N1 flu virus and helpful links to relevant resources](#), visit the Health Council's website at www.gchc.org.

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The Greater Cincinnati Health Council works with Tristate hospitals and other health providers to promote high quality, high value health care and to affect overall positive change in the health of the community. The Council is a recognized resource for information about area hospitals and the complex issues facing the health care industry.