

Important Information about H1N1

With influenza season upon us, Coventry Health Care offers the following information about H1N1 (formerly known as swine flu). Seasonal flu outbreaks usually happen between autumn and early spring each year. H1N1 is a serious and contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death.

H1N1 was first reported in Mexico in the spring of 2009. By late April, a growing number of people in the U.S. were infected. Information changes daily about the 2009 outbreak of H1N1. For the most up-to-date information, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.

The H1N1 Vaccine

The FDA approved a vaccine for H1N1 on September 15, 2009. The vaccine is now available in many locations. To find out where you can receive the vaccine, call your doctor. You can also visit your state health department website.

Who should receive the vaccine

The CDC recognizes six high-risk groups to receive the vaccines first.

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or provide care (parents, siblings and daycare providers) for infants aged under 6 months
- Health-care and emergency medical service personnel

- Persons aged 6 months–24 years, and persons aged 24-64 years who have medical conditions that put them at higher risk for influenza-related complications

Coverage for the H1N1 Vaccine

The federal government is covering the cost of the novel H1N1 vaccine. Coventry Health Care will cover the administrative cost of receiving the vaccine and associated office visit if the network physician bills for it and if your benefit plan covers vaccines. You are still responsible for copays and deductibles as with any medical service

Please note: This information is referenced with the understanding that a physician's screening and treatment plan for any particular patient will be individualized. Physicians, employees and members are encouraged to refer to these and other authoritative sources as their individual clinical situations may require. Coventry Health Care does not exercise any control or direction over a treating provider's medical judgment or clinical decisions, or interfere with the physician/patient relationship. Coverage of services is subject to the terms and conditions of your benefit plan.

Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website
- WHO (World Health Organization)
- Department of Health and Human Services website
- April 28, 2009 communication by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to all Medicare Part D Sponsors.