

Precautions For H1N1

The only portals of entry for H1N1 are the nostrils and mouth/ throat. In a global epidemic of this nature, **it's almost impossible not coming into contact with H1N1 in spite of all precautions.** Contact with H1N1 is not so much of a problem as proliferation is.

With the constant fear of H1N1 symptoms, **the following measures** that are within means of most households, and certainly much less painful than to wait in long queues outside public hospitals **can be practiced by one and all.**

- 1. Frequent hand-washing** (well highlighted in all official communications).
- 2. "Hands-off-the-face"** approach. Resist all temptations to touch any part of face (unless eating or bathing).
- 3. *Gargle twice a day with warm salt water** (use Listerine if you don't trust salt). H1N1 takes 2-3 days after initial infection in the throat/ nasal cavity to proliferate and show characteristic symptoms. **Simple gargling prevents proliferation.** In a way, gargling with salt water has the same effect on a healthy individual that Tamiflu has on an infected one. **Don't underestimate this simple, inexpensive and powerful preventative method.**
- 4. Similar to 3 above, clean your nostrils at least once every day with warm salt water.** Not everybody may be good at Jala Neti or Sutra Neti (very good Yoga asanas to clean nasal cavities), but **blowing the nose hard once a day and swabbing both nostrils with cotton buds dipped in warm salt water is very effective** in bringing down viral population.
- 5. Boost your natural immunity with foods that are rich in Vitamin C** (citrus fruits). If you have to supplement with Vitamin C tablets, make sure that it also has Zinc/bioflavonoids to boost absorption.
- 6. *Drink as much of warm liquids as you can.** Drinking warm liquids has the same effect as gargling, but in the reverse direction. **They wash off proliferating viruses from the throat into the stomach** where they cannot survive, proliferate or do any harm.