WHAT IS THE H1N1 FLU VIRUS?
H1N1 (sometimes called “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus detected in 2009 that causes illness in people.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?
H1N1 flu virus symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including H1N1, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Severe illnesses and deaths have occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

IF I SUSPECT THAT SOMEONE IN MY HOUSEHOLD HAS H1N1, WHAT SHOULD I DO?
Most people with H1N1 have mild illness and have not needed medical care. However if there is any of the following, seek medical care. The early emergency warning signs are:

In children:
- Irregular breathing, bluish skin color, not drinking enough fluids, not interacting, being so irritable that the child does not want to be held, flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough, fever with a rash

In adults:
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe or persistent vomiting

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF SOMEONE DOES HAVE THE H1N1 VIRUS?
• If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Most people have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs. Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

HOW LONG DOES IT USUALLY LAST?
• Infected people may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. This can be longer in some people, especially children and people with weakened immune systems.

CAN SOMEONE GET THE VIRUS MORE THAN ONCE?
• It’s unlikely that a person would be infected with the same influenza virus more than once, except for people with weakened immunity. It’s also possible that a person could have different types of the flu virus such as the H1N1 and then the seasonal flu virus.

HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?
The virus is spread the same way that seasonal flu spreads: mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza or by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching the mouth or nose.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY HOUSEHOLD FROM THE H1N1 VIRUS?
• Wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
• Avoid close contact with sick people.
• Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other measures.
• Get vaccinated. The flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu infection.

SHOULD I VACCINATE THE CHILDREN IN MY CARE?
One of the initial target groups for the H1N1 vaccine are people 6 months- age 24 (especially children younger than 5 years and those who have high risk medical conditions).

DO I NEED A COURT ORDER TO GET THIS VACCINATION?
The Department’s Position: The H1N1 vaccination is "ordinary medical care". Shelter/dependency/disposition court orders typically have language that authorizes immunization as ordinary medical care. If the order does not have the correct language authorizing ordinary care, then informed parental consent or a valid court order should be obtained.

SHOULD I ALSO BE VACCINATED?
If you care for infants younger than 6 months (who are too young to be vaccinated), are 65 or older, have an immunosuppressive conditions, or are pregnant, you are in the target group for vaccinations.

WHERE CAN I GET THE VACCINATION?
This differs by locale; therefore it is best to contact your pediatrician or local health department for this information.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS?
Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given, low fever, aches, running nose, headaches, vomiting.