

Recommendations of the Health Protection Inspectorate in connection with the new pandemic A/H1N1 flu

As of 25.11.2009, the first case of deaths caused by the A/H1N1 flu virus have been notified in Estonia. Total 302 cases of A/H1N1 flu has been confirmed. The number of illness cases has increased in the last few days and the number of flu cases that are not connected to travelling has grown, indicating the beginning of domestic spread.

Preventive action at place of work

- Avoid organising mass events, especially during periods of high levels of illness
- Keep a distance of at least 1 m between employees in the office. In case this is not possible, shorten the time of contact
- If possible, allow people with chronic diseases to stay home or create conditions for them to work at home
- Allow employees to stay home in case any symptoms of illness emerge and notify the employer of illness
- Organise a daily wipe-down: Clean surfaces, door handles, etc. with household cleaning agents / disinfectants
- Regularly air rooms
- Clean and disinfect toilet furnishings and surfaces daily
- Equip toilet facilities with a sufficient amount of hand washing agents and install waste containers that can be opened using your foot. Hands should be dried by the means of a paper towel or an automatic blow dryer
- It is recommended to temporarily separate from other people the employees who have developed flu-like symptoms at work. In case persons with flu-like symptoms cannot be separated from other people, they need to wear a surgical mask. The number of people coming into contact with the colleague with suspected flu should be reduced to a minimum.

Personal preventive measures

- Wash hands frequently
- When sneezing or coughing, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve or a disposable paper tissue. After use, immediately dispose of the tissue
- Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose
- Avoid close contact with sick persons; after contact or potential contact with persons sick with flu, keep an eye on your health, especially the occurrence of high fever and cough
- Keep a distance of at least 1 m from a person with flu symptoms

In case of emergence of flu-like symptoms

- Contact your contracted doctor, nearest family doctor or call the 24-h family doctor information line at **1220**, if necessary
- Follow the instructions given by your doctor
- In case of emergency call immediately **112**

Please note! The 24-h family doctor information line **1220** provides its services in Estonian, Russian and English. If the doctor answering your call cannot consult you in English, you will be called back as soon as possible. The 24-h family doctor information line **1220** only provides medical consultation.

Personal protection equipment

The use of personal protection equipment depends on the risk of infection; however, permanent use of a surgical mask is not necessary. Surgical masks should only be used by persons with symptoms of illness. If necessary, personal protection equipment can be bought freely in pharmacies.

Vaccination

At the moment, vaccines against the pandemic flu virus A/H1N1 are not available in Estonia. According to preliminary information vaccines will be available in December for risk groups only. Further information about the availability of vaccines and organizational issues of immunization will be provided publicly in the near-time.

Use of antiviral preparations

The anti-influenza drugs Oseltamivir (Tamiflu™) and Zanamivir (Relenza™) are available as prescription medicinal products in pharmacies. Your doctor will decide on the use of prescription medicinal products for both treatment and prevention of illness. According to the general international opinion, the use of antiviral drugs is not recommended for prevention of illness during an influenza pandemic.

All active treatment hospitals in Estonia have also been equipped with anti-influenza drugs. National anti-influenza drug reserves are being restocked.

For further information on flu and how to prevent it:

in Estonian: <http://www.tervisekaitse.ee/?mid=1109>; <http://www.gripivastu.ee>

in Russian: <http://www.tervisekaitse.ee/?mid=1109>; <http://www.gripivastu.ee>

Compiled by:

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