

TRAVEL HEALTH PRECAUTION  
CDC Travel Health Warning for Novel H1N1 Flu in Mexico Removed  
This information is current as of May 16, 2009 at 11:24 EDT

CDC's Travel Health Warning recommending against non-essential travel to Mexico, in effect since April 27, 2009, has now been downgraded to a Travel Health Precaution for Mexico.

Current Situation

CDC has been monitoring the ongoing outbreak of novel H1N1 flu in Mexico and, with the assistance of the Mexican authorities, has obtained a more complete picture of the outbreak. There is evidence that the Mexican outbreak is slowing down in many cities though not all. In addition, the United States and other countries are now seeing increasing numbers of cases not associated with travel to Mexico. Finally, the risk of severe disease from novel H1N1 virus infection now appears to be less than originally thought.

CDC Recommendations

At this time, CDC has removed its recommendation that U.S. travelers avoid travel to Mexico.

CDC continues to recommend that travelers visiting Mexico take steps to protect themselves from getting novel H1N1 flu.

CDC recommends that travelers at high risk for complications from any form of influenza discuss with their physicians the risks and benefits of travel in the context of their planned itinerary to Mexico, and may want to consider postponing travel. Travelers at high risk for complications include:

- Children less than 5 years old
- Persons aged 65 years or older
- Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza virus infection
- Pregnant women
- Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders
- Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV)
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities

*If you travel to an area that has reported cases of novel H1N1 flu:*

### **Stay Informed**

- Check updates from these sources:
  - [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
  - [Secretaria de Salud / Secretary of Health, Mexico](#) - Web page in Spanish
  - [World Health Organization Influenza A \(H1N1\) website](#)
  - [Pan American Health Organization](#)
- Be aware that Mexico is checking all exiting airline passengers for signs of novel H1N1 flu. Exit screening may cause significant delays at airports.

### **Prepare for your trip**

For all travelers, CDC recommends the following steps to help you stay healthy:

- Be sure you are up to date with all your routine vaccinations, including a seasonal influenza vaccine. The seasonal vaccine is not expected to offer protection against novel H1N1 flu, but it can protect against seasonal flu which may still be circulating in Mexico, the tropics and the Southern Hemisphere.
- Pack a travel health kit that contains basic first aid and medical supplies. See [Pack Smart in Your Survival Guide to Safe and Healthy Travel](#) for a list of what to include in your travel health kit.
- Identify the health-care resources in the area(s) you will be visiting.
- Check if your health insurance plan will cover you abroad. CDC recommends purchasing additional insurance that covers medical evacuation in case you become sick. For more information, see [Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad](#) from the U.S. Department of State.
- Remember that U.S. embassies, consulates and military facilities do not have the legal authority, capability, and resources to evacuate or to give medications, vaccines or medical care to private U.S. citizens overseas.

### **During your visit**

Monitor the local situation

- Pay attention to announcements from the local government.
- Follow local public health guidelines, including any movement restrictions and prevention recommendations.

Practice healthy habits to help stop the spread of novel H1N1 flu.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. This removes germs from your skin and helps prevent diseases from spreading.
  - Use waterless alcohol-based hand gels when soap is not available and hands are not visibly dirty.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in a wastebasket.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing, using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner when soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Avoid close contact with sick people (> 6 feet). Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- It is important to follow the advice of local health and government authorities. You may be asked to restrict your movement and stay in your home or hotel to contain the spread of novel H1N1 flu.

#### **What to do if you feel sick during travel**

- If you have severe illness or you are at high risk for flu complications, contact a health-care provider or seek medical care. A health-care provider will determine whether flu testing or treatment is needed.
- If you need to find local medical care, a U.S. consular officer can help you locate medical services and will inform your family or friends in the United States of your illness. To contact the U.S. embassy or consulate in the country where you are visiting, call the Overseas Citizens Services at:
  - 1-888-407-4747 if calling from the U.S. or Canada,
  - 00 1 202-501-4444 if calling from overseas, or
  - Find your local U.S. Embassy at Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions.
- Persons with influenza-like illness (such as fever with either cough or sore throat) should be advised to avoid further travel for 7 days after the onset of illness or at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- For more information about what to do if you become sick while you are traveling outside the United States, visit Your Survival Guide for Safe and Healthy Travel.

For information on CDC's recommendations for antiviral use during the novel H1N1 flu outbreak, please visit [CDC's Interim Guidance on Antiviral Recommendations for Patients with Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Infection and Their Close Contacts](#).

### **After your trip**

- Closely monitor your health for 7 days.
- If you become ill with fever and other symptoms of novel H1N1 flu such as a cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue and possibly vomiting and diarrhea, see the information under in the section above titled "What to do if you feel sick during travel" and the [What to Do If You Get Flu-Like Symptoms](#) page on the [CDC H1N1 Flu website](#).

### *Status of Entry and Exit Screening in the United States and Mexico*

#### **Mexico Exit Screening**

Novel H1N1 flu screening has been instituted at airports and land borders for travelers departing Mexico, according to Mexican health authorities. Passengers showing symptoms of novel H1N1 flu will be asked to submit voluntarily to physical examination and further evaluation, if needed.

#### **United States**

At this time, the United States is not conducting enhanced entry screening of passengers arriving from Mexico, nor is the United States conducting exit screening of passengers departing the United States.

CDC staff at airports will provide all ill passengers and their contacts arriving from Mexico with [Travel Health Alert Notices](#). These notices provide information regarding seeking health advice from a physician and how to prevent illness in persons who have been exposed but who are not ill.

#### **Additional Information**

If you have specific questions about novel H1N1 flu cases, see the [Contact CDC webpage](#) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).

To learn more about travel health, visit the [CDC Travelers' Health website](#).

For novel H1N1 flu situation updates in the following areas visit:

#### **Mexico**

- [Secretaria de Salud](#) Secretary of Health, Mexico - Web page in Spanish
- [Pan American Health Organization](#)

## United States

- [CDC H1N1 flu website](#)
- For information on antiviral recommendations, see [CDC's Interim Guidance on Antiviral Recommendations for Patients with Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Infection and Their Close Contacts](#)

## Global

- [World Health Organization Influenza A \(H1N1\) website](#)
- [Update: Novel Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Infections --- Worldwide \(MMWR Weekly May 8, 2009/58\(17\);453-458\)](#)
- [Novel H1N1 Flu and Travel - Information for Travelers, Airlines, etc.](#)
- [Announcement: Possible International Travel Delays Due to Novel H1N1 Flu Screening Procedures](#)

Novel H1N1 flu travel health updates will be posted on the [CDC Travelers' Health website](#) as information becomes available.