

**TOMPKINS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**Alice Cole, RN, MSE – Public Health Director**

**For Immediate Release**

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**SECOND CASE OF H1N1 INFLUENZA CONFIRMED – SURVEILLANCE CONTINUES**

**Ithaca, NY 14850 (June 3, 2009)** – The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) lab confirmed a second case of H1N1 influenza in Tompkins County. The person is an adult and is recovering at home.

Alice Cole, Tompkins County Health Department (TCHD) Public Health Director noted that tests for individual suspect cases of H1N1 would no longer be sent to the NYSDOH lab for confirmation. “We know that H1N1 is in Tompkins County. Our focus now is to look for patterns of illness in the community with the goal of limiting the spread of this influenza.”

TCHD staff is in contact with schools, colleges, Cayuga Medical Center and other providers to assess any unusual patterns of illness or absenteeism. “All schools remain open in the County; absenteeism remains normal for this time of year,” Cole added. Suspect cases might be sent to the NYSDOH lab for confirmation if a cluster of influenza-like illness was identified in a work, school or community setting.

Public health officials, including TCHD continue to monitor H1N1 because it is a “novel” influenza. That means that this is a new influenza virus with a gene combination that has not been seen before. At this time H1N1 is behaving the same as seasonal flu. Most people who have H1N1 are able to recover at home. Because influenza viruses can mutate quickly, public health officials are monitoring the patterns of transmission and severity of illness.

Symptoms of H1N1 are similar to seasonal flu. They include fever of 100 degrees or more, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea or vomiting which is not typical of seasonal flu. Like seasonal flu, H1N1 can vary in severity from mild to severe, and may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

H1N1 as with seasonal flu is spreads through respiratory droplets from coughs or sneezes. Influenza viruses can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on an object and then touches their own mouth and nose before washing their hands.

(more)

To prevent the spread of H1N1 and to stay healthy:

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 that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

Stay home if you are sick for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer. This is to keep from infecting others and spreading the virus further.

If you think you need medical attention, call your doctor.

Stay in good general health – get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage stress, drink plenty of liquids and eat nutritious food.

For more information about Novel H1N1 influenza go to the Tompkins County Health Department website: [www.tompkins-co.org/health](http://www.tompkins-co.org/health) or [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/) or [www.nyhealth.gov](http://www.nyhealth.gov)