

# H1N1 UPDATE

Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene  
Greater Monadnock Public Health Network  
580-90 Court Street  
Keene, NH 03431  
603-354-5400

For Immediate Release

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## **A Flu-Free Feast? How to Avoid Spreading Influenza along With Holiday Cheer**

(Keene, 11/20/2009) — Thanksgiving is a time for family and friends and also an ideal opportunity for spreading influenza. Traditional greetings of hugs, kisses, and handshakes can spread viruses. Finger foods and dips, shared cups, utensils, and cloth towels may also transmit germs from one person to another. With a few precautions, people can limit their chances of catching or spreading H1N1 or seasonal flu at Thanksgiving.

Influenza is spread by droplets from coughs and sneezes. Cover your cough or sneeze with the inside of the sleeve in your elbow or use a tissue. Dispose of the tissue after use and wash your hands with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Experiment with new greetings at your doorway, especially with those facing the greatest risk for flu complications (i.e., pregnant women and children/young adults with chronic conditions.). Encourage waves, pats on the back, or knocking elbows instead of kissing, hugging, and handshakes. If you shake hands, use hand sanitizer or wash your hands with soap and warm water before touching your mouth or nose.

Avoid sharing things that have touched someone else's mouth. Don't share forks, knives, or spoons. Sometimes people do this by accident. If you taste a dish with a spoon, place it in the

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dishwasher afterwards, that way the spoon won't be dipped back into the dish again. Use separate serving spoons at the dinner table. Don't use the fork or spoon you are eating with to serve yourself.

Stay home if you are sick. Doctors recommend people not return to normal activities such as work, school, or social settings until their fever has been gone for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. A person who has a fever, sore throat, or cough should not be preparing or serving food.

For more information, treatment resources, or other assistance, call 2-1-1 (in NH) or 1-866-444-4211 (all other states) any time of day or visit [www.211nh.org](http://www.211nh.org). You can also visit websites for Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene (CMD/DHK) ([www.cheshiremed.org](http://www.cheshiremed.org)) or the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network (GMPHN) (<http://co.cheshire.nh.us/PublicHealth/>). CMC/DHK and GMPHN work together to plan and protect public health and safety in concert with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services ([www.nh.gov/h1n1](http://www.nh.gov/h1n1)). Together CMC/DHK and GMPHN will offer updates on flu season preventions and precautions for the Monadnock Region.

For flu clinic information any time of day or night, call Cheshire Medical/Center Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene's information lines or visit its website ([www.cheshiremed.org](http://www.cheshiremed.org)).

Seasonal Flu vaccine info: 354-5405 Option #1

H1N1 Flu vaccine info: 354-5405 Option #2

Pediatric Flu Clinic Hotline: 354-6665