



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

For Immediate Release

### **Medicap Pharmacy® Pharmacists Answer Common H1N1 (Swine) Flu Questions**

*Local pharmacists offer take-home pamphlets on swine flu to help explain the disease, its symptoms and its treatment*

**May 7, 2009** – Medicap Pharmacy® pharmacists across the country are helping their local customers understand the recent H1N1 flu outbreak. As part of their education efforts, participating Medicap Pharmacy stores are giving away free, take-home educational materials to help minimize any myths or misinformation on the disease and provide tips on the prevention and treatment of H1N1 flu.

“As the H1N1 flu continues to draw attention, consumers are, unfortunately, coming upon some misinformation on contracting and protecting yourself from the disease,” said Keith Cook, R.Ph., vice president of clinical pharmacy at Medicine Shoppe International, franchisor of Medicap Pharmacy stores. “The H1N1 flu is potentially a serious threat, and it’s important for consumers to inform themselves and understand the disease and prevention.”

The informational materials answers some of the most common questions on the H1N1 flu to help customers understand the symptoms to know when to seek immediate medical attention. The pamphlet includes questions and answers such as:

- **Is H1N1 flu the same as the well-known seasonal flu?**  
No. The strains of the H1N1 flu are very different from the seasonal flu. As a result, this season’s flu shot will not protect someone from contracting H1N1 (swine flu).
- **What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?**  
The symptoms of the H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are very similar. H1N1 flu symptoms are similar to those of the seasonal flu, including fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, and coughing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), some who have been infected with the swine flu also reported having a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- **How does H1N1 flu spread?**  
Swine influenza is a respiratory disease that originated in pigs. Human infection initially happens when patients have direct contact with infected pigs. Human-to-human transmission of the swine flu occurs similar to the way the human seasonal flu virus is transmitted through coughing, sneezing and coming in contact with a person or object with the virus. A person *cannot* become infected by eating pork or pork products.
- **Are there ways I can protect myself from H1N1 flu?**  
Yes. While there is no vaccine to prevent infection of the H1N1 flu, the CDC is recommending avoiding close contact with people that are sick as much as possible, frequently wash your hands and disinfect shared household objects such as faucets and doorknobs.

- **How is H1N1 flu treated?**

There is no human vaccine currently available that is specifically for H1N1 flu. The CDC is recommending two prescription antivirals, Tamiflu or Relenza, to help treat and/or prevent swine flu. These medicines should be taken as soon as possible after illness onset.

“It’s important to always remember to take the right action to prevent contracting any virus, including frequent hand washing and staying up-to-date on immunizations,” added Cook. “Your pharmacist is a great resource to start to understand the disease, as well as to help determine if you need to seek further medical advice or treatment. However, if you or a loved one experience any flu symptoms, contact your physician immediately.”

For more information about swine flu, please visit the CDC’s Web site at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu).

### **About Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated**

Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated ([www.medicap.com](http://www.medicap.com)), which franchises independent community pharmacies in the U.S. under the trade name "Medicap Pharmacy®," is distinguished for its commitment to providing expert, personalized health care. In 2003, Medicine Shoppe International, Inc. ([www.medicineshoppe.com](http://www.medicineshoppe.com)) acquired Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated. Medicine Shoppe International is one of the largest franchisors of independent community pharmacies in the U.S. There are approximately 800 domestic Medicine Shoppe pharmacies and Medicap Pharmacy locations and approximately 400 Medicine Shoppe pharmacies in five other countries.

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