



## Timely Information for Personal Success

# The Swine Flu & You

By *Tim Lencki*

If you haven't heard about the H1N1 flu virus (a.k.a. swine flu) by now, you're probably living under a rock. It's predicted that the virus will reach pandemic status, which is an important distinction as OSHA notes that in a pandemic, "...people might not have any natural immunity to the new strain — so the disease would be spread rapidly among the population." If a pandemic occurs, it's important to understand how it'll affect you and your workplace.

The H1N1 flu virus is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to normal seasonal flu. These symptoms include fever, body aches, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. While many cases of H1N1 have been of a mild nature, if any of the following symptoms occur, seek immediate medical attention:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath;
- Chest pain;
- Severe or persistent vomiting;
- High fever for more than two days; and/or
- Confusion or difficulty waking an ill person.

A pandemic flu outbreak could have a significant impact on the workplace. Absenteeism could be a major issue — either due to employees themselves being sick or due to them needing to care for a family member who's ill. In addition, schools and day care centers could close, so parents would need to stay at home with their children.

It's in everyone's interests to stay away. Flu-like illnesses spreads easily, often through coughing or sneezing — but also by touching contaminated objects, and then touching eyes, mouths, or noses. Take the following steps to protect yourself:

- ☑ Cover your nose or mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then, throw the tissue away. If a tissue isn't available, cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow instead of into your hands.
- ☑ Wash your hands often with soap and water. Preferably, take 15-20 seconds. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

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## Fitness

*Make it Work This Time*

With the new year just around the corner, you may be thinking about starting an exercise program. The following are a few tips to help make this 2010 New Year's resolution a success:

✓ **Find an activity you enjoy.**

Not everybody is an exercise freak — you need to find something you like to stick with it. It's not just about a regimented program, it's about being more physically active. Go hiking, cross-country skiing, or try yoga, water aerobics or a dance class. Keep experimenting until you find something that suits you.

✓ **Exercise in the morning.**

This is something I practice myself, and it works. There's simply less chance to make excuses early in the day.

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## Healthy Recipe: Baked Apple-Cinnamon French Toast

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups nonfat milk
- 2 cups pasteurized liquid egg whites
- 3 Tablespoons honey
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1-pound loaf sliced whole-wheat bread
- 1 cup chopped dried apples (3 ounces)
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 Tablespoon confectioners sugar

### NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Calories per serving: 183
- Protein: 10 g.
- Carbohydrates: 33g.
- Sodium: 344 mg;
- Fat: 1 g.



### DIRECTIONS:

① Whisk milk, egg whites, honey, vanilla & salt in large bowl. ② Trim crusts off 8 bread slices, set aside. Cut crusts & remaining bread into 1-inch pieces. Toss with dried apples, raisins, cinnamon, nutmeg in another large bowl. ③ Coat 9x13 baking pan w/cooking spray. Transfer bread mixture to pan. Lay crustless slices evenly on top, trimming to fit. Whisk milk mixture again, then pour evenly over bread. Press bread down with back of wooden spoon, making sure it's evenly moist. Cover with parchment paper & foil, refrigerate for at least 8 hours up to 24 hours. ④ Preheat oven to 350 degrees. ⑤ Bake casserole, covered, for 40 minutes. Uncover, continue baking until puffed, set & lightly browned, another 20 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes; dust with sugar, serve.

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### Questions and Answers

## Teens & Weightlifting

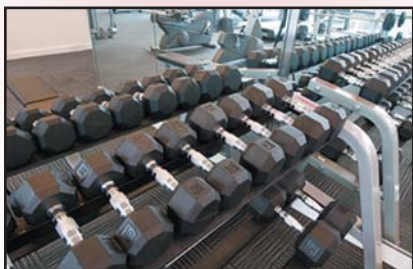
**Q:** Should teenagers lift weights?

**A:** Exercise and physical activity are important for kids of *all* ages. However, it's important to note that kids younger than 14 should think more along the lines of being active, rather than serious weight training.

At about age 14, hormonal changes in a teen will create a more optimal environment for muscle growth. And even then, until a teen reaches age 18, the growth plates at the end of the bones haven't fully hardened.

As a result, teens should refrain from heavy weightlifting. Instead, strive for a repetition range from 12-15 using lighter weights. Admittedly, this isn't easy because teens like to flaunt, "How much can I bench press?"

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- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially in public places.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces.

If you're sick, it's recommended that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone. An exception would be if you need to venture outside the home to seek medical care. Moreover, the fever should be gone *without* the use of fever-reducing medications.

Employers have a legal obligation to provide a safe, disease-free workplace for employees. At the same time, *employees* need to do what *they* can to take necessary precautions and use common sense to prevent the spread of flu viruses — whether H1N1 or a seasonal strain. ❖

Tim Lencki is a strength and conditioning specialist and author of "Fitness One Day at a Time." Visit Tim's website at [www.thefitnesseducator.com](http://www.thefitnesseducator.com). **Editor's note:** The advice in this article is for educational purposes only and should not be construed as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Consult a physician regarding the applicability of recommendations appearing in this article.

### Fitness: Make it Work This Time

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✓ **Find an exercise partner.** When exercise is social, it's more enjoyable. This person can be a great accountability partner to make sure you stick with it, and vice versa.

✓ **Abandon the all-or-nothing approach.** You don't need an hour to work out. Do you have 30 minutes? 20? Or what about a few 10-minute blocks of time? Anything is better than nothing! If you miss a workout, don't beat yourself up, just get going again.

✓ **Understand what it means to see progress.** READ MY LIPS: It's not just about weight loss! These results are also good: sleeping better, thinking more clearly, having more energy to play with your kids, getting a good report from your doctor, having muscles that don't ache after helping a friend move, etc. You get the idea — weight loss is great, but it shouldn't be your only reason to exercise. Try these tips — and *don't give up*. ❖

- Tim Lencki