



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:** Ravae Graham  
404-463-1718

## **Arm Yourself Against the Flu**

By Commissioner Rhonda Medows

As the flu season approaches and Georgians continue to express greater concerns about novel influenza A (H1N1), formerly named the swine flu, it is imperative that we educate ourselves, our colleagues and our loved ones about both the seasonal flu and novel H1N1 flu. To assist Georgians with this task, the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) recently launched the *Roll Up Your Sleeve* campaign.

*Roll Up Your Sleeve* highlights the importance of you getting a seasonal flu vaccination and the importance of high-risk individuals considering the novel H1N1 vaccination once it becomes available. The campaign also provides prevention steps you can take to minimize the spread of the flu viruses and the steps you should take if you or your family members develop flu symptoms.

While the severity and symptoms of novel H1N1 flu are similar to the seasonal flu, we anticipate seeing an increase in the number of novel H1N1 flu cases because very few people have immunity to this virus.

This increased number of novel H1N1 cases, combined with the people that will be affected by the seasonal flu will result in higher than normal absenteeism in schools and the workplace. Families and employers should make plans to address absenteeism now – plans that encourage sick children and ill employees to stay home.

Precautions everyone can take now are as simple as ABC:

A: Act to protect yourself by washing your hands regularly to diminish virus transmission. Use warm soapy water or alcohol based hand sanitizers. Also protect yourself by getting the seasonal flu shot this fall.

B: Be considerate. With a tissue or your shirt sleeve, cover your mouth when you cough and your nose when you sneeze. If you or your child become ill, remain home, feel better, and avoid spreading the illness to others.

C: Connect with your choice of trusted health information and keep up to date with information and recommendations about the new novel H1N1 vaccine.

For more information visit [www.dch.ga.gov/rollupyoursleeve](http://www.dch.ga.gov/rollupyoursleeve), or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/GADCH>.

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