

Swine Flu Awareness

Spread of this swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. There is no indication that this will lead to a pandemic flu outbreak.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages that hand washing and hand sanitizing with an alcohol-based hand rub are especially critical to minimize the spread of germs during times of illness outbreak. In addition the CDC recommends:

- 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.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work, school or public places and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are the symptoms with this virus?

Symptoms include fever, cough and runny nose, body aches, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?

If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school if ill.

What should I do if I get sick?

If you live in areas where swine influenza cases have been identified and you become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, contact your primary health care physician, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. Try to avoid going to the Emergency Room unless you are critically ill. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

What are the warning signs?

In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

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In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Can I get swine influenza from eating or preparing pork?

No. Swine influenza viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

For more information on Swine Influenza, log on to the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.

Please remember to stay calm, be focused and be prepared in the workplace and at home with basic supplies. The FEMA website recommends employees prepare themselves by reviewing: www.ready.gov.