

University Health Alert – Swine Influenza (Swine Flu)

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Swine Influenza Fact Sheet

What is swine flu?

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses cause high levels of illness and low death rates in pigs. Swine influenza viruses may circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans.

Is this swine flu virus contagious?

CDC has determined that this swine influenza A virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it is not known how easily the virus spreads between people.

What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of influenza which include:

- **Fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.**
- **Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.**

If you have any of the above signs and/or symptoms, immediately contact your primary care physician. If you are a student, immediately contact UDC Student Health Center.

How does swine flu spread?

Spread of this swine influenza 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.

Can people catch swine flu from eating pork?

No. Swine influenza viruses are not transmitted by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products are safe. Cooking pork to an internal temperature of 160°F kills the swine flu virus as it does other bacteria and viruses.

What should I do to keep from getting the swine flu?

If you are sick, limit your contact with other people as much as possible. Do not go to work or school if sick. If you are a student, please contact your professor for alternative methods of completing your academic obligations i.e. exams, term papers, attendance.

Prevention Tips

- 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 or use alcohol-based hand cleaners.
- Review hand washing guidelines provided in all of UDC's restrooms.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Is there a vaccine for swine flu?

Vaccines are available to be given to pigs to prevent swine influenza. There is no vaccine to protect humans from swine flu. .

What medications are available to treat swine flu infections in humans?

At this time, CDC recommends the use of Oseltamivir or Zanamivir for the treatment and/or prevention of infection with swine influenza viruses.

What should I do if I have business and/or leisure travel plans to Mexico?

Official university international travel must be approved by the Office of the President. All travel requests with destinations to the affected country will be referred to University Student Health Center. Also, CDC administers a "Travelers' Health" website that provides national and international public health travel announcements. There are four (4) levels of notifications administered by the CDC. To understand the different types of notifications and review current travelers' health announcements, follow this link <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/> .

References:

Center for Disease Control (CDC). "The Swine Flu and You" factsheet. April 26, 2009.

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm

CDC. "Key Fact about the Swine Influenza (Swine Flu)". April 24, 2009.

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/key_facts.htm

CDC "Swine Flu in Pigs and People" brochure. April 24, 2009. <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/pdf/brochure.pdf>

DC Department of Health "Swine Flu" factsheet. April 26, 2009

<http://doh.dc.gov/doh/frames.asp?doc=/doh/lib/doh/pdf/swineflufactsheet.pdf>