



New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

Swine Influenza Frequently Asked Questions

What is swine flu?

Swine influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses. Outbreaks of swine flu happen regularly in pigs.

Are there human infections with swine flu in the U.S.?

In late March and early April 2009, cases of human infection with swine influenza A (H1N1) virus were first reported in Southern California and near San Antonio, Texas. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local health agencies are working together to investigate the situation.

Is swine flu virus contagious?

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

What are the symptoms of swine flu in people?

The symptoms are similar to those of seasonal influenza and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with the swine flu. In the past, severe illness and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause underlying chronic medical conditions to get worse.

How does someone catch swine flu?

Swine flu can spread in two ways:

- Through contact with infected pigs or environments contaminated with swine flu viruses
- Through contact with a person with swine flu. Human-to-human spread of swine flu has been documented also and is thought to occur in the same way as seasonal flu. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

Is there medicine to treat swine flu?

Yes. The CDC recommends the use of oseltamivir or zanamivir for treatment of infection with the swine influenza viruses. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body.

Is it safe to eat pork and pork products?

Yes. 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.

How can I protect myself from getting sick?

There are a number of everyday actions you can take to help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza, including:

- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve when you cough
- Wash your hands with soap and water often, especially after you cough or sneeze
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If you get sick with influenza, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them

For more information about swine influenza, call the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) information line at 1-888-330-6764. For additional information visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website www.cdc.gov, the World Health Organization website www.who.org or the DHHS website www.dhhs.state.nh.us