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All You Need to Know about Swine Flu

Your Questions Answered

As of the end of April 2009, there have been 20 reported human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus in California, Texas, New York, Kansas and Ohio. This strain of influenza is unique because it is a combination of genes from swine, bird and human viruses.

What is Swine Flu?

Swine influenza is a respiratory disease that causes a regular outbreak in pigs. Humans do not normally get swine flu, yet infections can occur, and have now been reported and spread from person to person.

Is Swine Flu Contagious?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that swine flu is contagious in humans. In fact, sick individuals may be able to infect others beginning one day before their symptoms develop and up to seven days or more after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know that you are sick, as well as while you are still battling the virus.

Are there Medications to Treat Swine Flu?

There are two medications available to treat swine flu, and are most effective when they are used within two days of showing symptoms.

What Can You do to Protect Yourself Against Swine Flu?

There is no vaccine currently available to protect against this virus. However, there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses, such as swine flu. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are ill.
- If you do become sick with swine flu, stay home from work or school and limit your contact with others to keep from infecting them.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing. Throw the tissue away after using it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after sneezing and coughing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.

What Should You Do if You Get Sick?

If you live in areas where swine flu has been identified and you become ill with influenza-like symptoms – fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea and vomiting or diarrhea – contact your healthcare provider immediately. He/she will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is necessary.

For more information on swine flu, visit www.cdc.gov/contact/ or call 1-800-232-4636.



If You are Taking a Trip...

to an area where swine flu cases have been reported, pay close attention to announcements from the local government, follow all local public health guidelines and wash your hands often with soap and water.