

Cheyney University of Pennsylvania

H1N1 Health & Safety Message





What is swine flu?

Like many forms of influenza, swine flu is transmitted among people and animals -- in this case, the virus has elements linked to people, birds and pigs. The link to animals is not unusual, but this particular strain appears to be new.



How does swine flu spread?

Coughing and sneezing can spread infectious droplets, as with most varieties of the flu. You can catch the flu by being near someone who's sneezing or coughing, or by touching a surface with droplets and then touching your mouth or nose.



Can I get swine flu from eating pork or other pig products?

No. Swine flu spreads via droplets, not inside food. Properly prepared pork products should be safe to eat.



What are the symptoms of swine flu?

This variety seems to have many of the same symptoms as classic flu -- headache, fever, sore throat, muscle soreness and cough. Children with the virus may develop vomiting.



Should people with flu-like symptoms seek medical help?

Not all people with the flu require urgent medical attention, but if you're uncertain check with the Health Center – (610) 399-2260. In children, warning signs of a possible emergency include: fast breathing, bluish skin color, not enough drinking of fluids, failure to wake up, extreme irritability, and fever with rash. In adults, the warning signs include: shortness of breath, pain in the chest or abdomen, dizziness, confusion, and severe or persistent vomiting.



Is there a treatment for swine flu?

Yes. Laboratory tests indicate that this variety of swine influenza A (H1N1) can be treated with oseltamivir (also called Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza). These anti-viral drugs can be used to treat or prevent swine flu in high-risk groups, such as elderly people with known exposure to swine flu. But early cases indicate that the disease often can be treated like a normal flu case -- stay home and avoid contact with others. Patients should consult with a doctor to determine the best course of treatment.



How can I avoid getting swine flu?

Old-fashioned methods often work best: Wash your hands regularly, avoid touching your hands to your mouth, eyes or nose, avoid close contact with people known to have the flu, and for everyone's sake cover your mouth when you sneeze.



Do I need to wear a facemask to avoid getting swine flu?

No. The evidence is inconclusive on whether facemasks help ordinary people avoid getting the virus in public places. In areas of infection, facemasks alone are inadequate to protect people from swine flu.



How can I learn more about swine flu?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provide credible information about swine flu. Visit the CDC's website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>

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