

**Press Release**  
**Swine Influenza A (H1N1)**  
**April 26, 2009**

On April 17, 2009 the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified two human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus in San Diego county California. Since then 20 new cases have been identified in California, Texas, Kansas, Ohio and New York City. None of the cases have recent contact with swine and there has been no link established between the cases except for one father and daughter. In addition, the same strain of swine influenza A (H1N1) has been identified by CDC from patients who are part of an ongoing outbreak of acute respiratory illness in central Mexico. A number of deaths have been reported from this outbreak. Influenza vaccine does not provide reliable protection against swine flu virus.

Spread of swine flu can occur in two ways. The first is through contact with infected pigs or environments contaminated with swine flu viruses. The second is 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.

Tamiflu (oseltamivir or zanamivir) has been successful in the treatment and/or prevention of infection with these swine influenza viruses. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaler) that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within 2 days of symptoms).

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine flu. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- 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 with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

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*Resources: CDC swine flu information, infection control and treatment recommendations*