

UPDATE:

Swine Influenza (Flu)

The occurrence of the Swine Flu has generated concern among communities, families and schools. Currently, in California there have been six (6) confirmed cases in San Diego and Imperial Counties. There have been no (0) cases confirmed in Orange County. The Orange County Health Care Agency is on enhanced surveillance, monitoring hospitals, emergency departments and outpatient clinics to ensure the health and safety of all individuals.

Currently, the Orange County Health Care Agency, the California Department of Health Services and the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) are working together to monitor this situation and will alert the public of changes if the need should occur.

At this time they are encouraging individuals to continue their daily routines with increased awareness and practice in the techniques of preventing the spread of communicable disease.

What is Swine Flu?

Swine influenza A virus infection (swine flu) can cause a wide range of symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. People with swine flu also can have vomiting and diarrhea. Like seasonal flu, swine flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Certain groups might be more likely to develop a severe illness from swine flu infection, such as persons with chronic medical conditions.

How Swine Flu Spreads:

The main way that influenza viruses are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

People with swine flu or any form of influenza should:

- check with their health care provider about any special care they might need if they are pregnant or have a health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or emphysema
- check with their health care provider about whether they should take antiviral medications
- stay home until fever free and/or all symptoms are gone
- get plenty of rest
- drink clear fluids to keep from being dehydrated
- cover coughs and sneezes. Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often and especially after using tissues and after coughing or sneezing into hands.
- avoid close contact with others – do not go to work or school while ill
- treat fever, headache and body aches with non-aspirin pain reliever

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy:

There are everyday actions people can take to stay healthy.

- 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Resources

Following are resources for information about preventing the spread of flu in school:

- CDC has prepared a poster for schools that illustrates the message: “Be a Germ Stopper.” This is available at www.cdc.gov/germstopper
- It’s a snap (www.itsasnap.org/index.asp) offers free educational program materials about making hand cleaning an integral part of the school day.

For continued updates and further information check the Center for Communicable Disease website at: www.cdc.gov/swineflu