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## *Human Swine Flu Virus (SIV) Infections - April 27 Update # 2*

### *Action Requested:*

- Consider the possibility of swine flu in persons with **influenza-like illness and recent travel to Mexico** who have been in contact with ill persons from Mexico or other affected areas in the US in the 7 days before illness onset.
- If swine flu is suspected, obtain a respiratory swab for testing for Influenza A through your regular laboratory. If Influenza A is identified, laboratories will forward the specimens to the Department of Health lab for confirmation. Specimens will then be forwarded to CDC if swine flu is suspected. Use airborne infection control precautions for specimen collection.
- Take appropriate infection control precautions including airborne precautions for *hospitalized* patients (see link to CDC recommendations, below).
- All healthcare facilities should review respiratory hygiene measures in outpatient areas.
- Report suspected cases of swine flu to Public Health immediately at 360-786-5470 to facilitate:
  - A) laboratory confirmation of the diagnosis, and
  - B) prompt investigation and of cases and identification of other persons at risk for illness.
- Please advise all patients who are ill with influenza like illness:
  - Stay home when sick.
  - Cover your cough and wash your hands.
  - Know signs and symptoms of flu and when to seek care.
- Travel advisories for folks going to Mexico to avoid crowds, being around ill folks.
- There is increased disease surveillance at ports of entry into USA.

**Background:** Twenty cases of human infection with a newly recognized, novel swine influenza A (H1N1) virus (SIV) have been confirmed by CDC among residents of San Diego County and Imperial County, California (6) and Guadalupe County, near San Antonio Texas (2), Kansas City, New York City, and Ohio. The cases have no known contact with swine or links to one another suggesting that human to human spread is occurring. The extent of spread in the US is not known at this time. The cases tested positive for influenza A, but could not be subtyped locally and were sent to CDC for identification. All patients in the US had uncomplicated illness and have recovered. The viruses appear to be sensitive to Tamiflu and Relenza but not to the older antivirals. Influenza vaccine does not provide reliable protection against swine flu virus.

There is widespread respiratory illness and influenza like illness in Mexico, with over 60 deaths reported. Some of the specimens from Mexico are confirmed to be identical to the H1N1 virus seen in the US cases. Please review your pandemic influenza response plans.

SIV can cause uncomplicated **influenza-like illness (fever, cough or sore throat)**, mild respiratory illness (nasal congestion, rhinorrhea) without fever and occasional severe disease. Other symptoms reported with SIV infection include vomiting, diarrhea, myalgia, headache, chills, fatigue, and dyspnea. Persons with SIV infection should be considered potentially contagious from one day before to 7 days following illness onset or until symptoms have resolved. Children, especially younger children, might

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potentially be contagious for longer periods. The duration of infectiousness might vary by SIV strain. Infection control measures include airborne precautions for hospitalized patients.

Current CDC recommendations for treatment of influenza will be effective against SIV.

- Please see CDC swine flu information at: [www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm)
- Please see CDC swine flu infection control & treatment recommendations at: [www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/recommendations.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/recommendations.htm)

## **GUIDANCE FOR PATIENTS ABOUT FLU**

Most healthy people recover from the flu without complications. If you get the flu:

- Stay home from work or school.
- Get lots of rest, drink plenty of liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco.
- There are over-the-counter (OTC) medications to relieve the symptoms of the flu (but never give aspirin to children or teenagers who have flu-like symptoms, particularly fever).
- Remember that serious illness from the flu is more likely in certain groups of people including people 65 and older, pregnant women, people with certain chronic medical conditions and young children.
- Consult your doctor early on for the best treatment, but also be aware of emergency warning signs that require urgent medical attention.

**Seek emergency medical care** if you or someone you know is having any of following warning signs discussed below.

**In children**, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

**In adults**, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

**Seek emergency medical care** if you or someone you know is experiencing any of the signs above.