



Talking Points
Swine Flu
April 29, 2009
Adapted from CDC



What is Swine Influenza?

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that causes regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen. Swine flu viruses have been reported to spread from person-to-person.

Is this swine flu virus contagious?

Yes, CDC has determined that this swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it not known how easily the virus spreads between people.

How does swine flu spread?

Spread of this swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How can someone with the flu infect someone else?

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

What can people do to prevent being infected by the swine flu virus?

- 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 hands cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact (6 feet) with sick 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

What are the symptoms of swine flu in humans?

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu in humans and may include:

- Fever (greater than 100°F or 37.8°C)
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Stuffy nose
- Chills
- Headache and body aches
- Fatigue

Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu.

Have there been any cases of swine flu reported in Virginia?

No. All recent cases in the United States have been confirmed in California, Texas, Kansas, Ohio and New York.

What is Virginia doing?

The Virginia Department of Health routinely monitors influenza like activity (ILI). In light of current findings, we are asking health care providers to be alert to symptoms of swine flu virus and the patients travel history and are requesting ongoing testing of ILI by physicians.

Can people catch swine flu from eating pork?

No. Swine influenza viruses are not transmitted by food.

What medications are available to treat swine flu infections in humans?

At this time, CDC recommends the use of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) or zanamivir (Relenza) for the treatment of infection with swine influenza viruses.

Is there a vaccine available to prevent this flu virus?

No, There is no vaccine available at this time.

Guidelines and advice for the public may change as the CDC learns more about this virus.

CDC has activated a hotline to answer public concerns: 800-CDC-INFO

Updates on this investigation are available at <http://cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm>