

what you need to know about

swine flu

Source: Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

What is swine flu?

Swine Influenza (flu) is a respiratory disease pigs get that is caused by a virus. People do not normally get swine flu, but they can. Recently, swine flu has made people sick in several countries including Mexico and the U.S.

Are there human infections with swine flu in the U.S.?

Yes. People started getting infected in the U.S. in late March and early April 2009. The infection is in several states. For updated information on where there are swine flu infections, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>

Is this swine flu virus contagious?

You can catch this particular kind of swine flu, called swine influenza A (H1N1), from other people who have it. Experts believe it is being spread by being coughed on, sneezed on, or touching something that an infected person touched, then touching your mouth or nose. Sometimes people are contagious before they start to feel sick.

What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?

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. Like with the regular flu, swine flu can weaken your body and make you more prone to other illnesses.

What should I do to keep from getting the flu?

First and most important: **wash your hands thoroughly and often.** Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Try not touch surfaces that sick people may have touched (door handles, etc.). Avoid close contact with sick people.

Are there medicines to treat swine flu?

Yes. The medicines are called antivirals and a doctor will prescribe them if he or she thinks you may be infected.

What should I do if I get sick?

If you think you may have swine flu, call your doctor. He or she will decide whether you need to be tested and started on the medicine. **Most importantly, if you're sick, stay home** to keep from spreading the disease. If you are very sick, such as if you're having trouble breathing, and your doctor is not available, call 911.

Emergency warning signs in children

- 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

Emergency warning signs in adults

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

Can I get swine flu from eating or preparing pork?

No. As long as you properly prepare and cook the pork, it is safe to eat.

Gaston County Swine Flu Hotline (8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays)
704-853-5200

North Carolina Swine Flu Care Line (24 hours)
1-800-662-7030

Gaston County Health Department
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