

ARE YOU READY?



What is swine flu?



Swine flu is a respiratory disease that is normally found in pigs, but can be caught by people too. Symptoms include the same things you might experience with the flu you get in the winter: fever, cough, fatigue, headache, chills, body aches, sore throat, diarrhea and vomiting. It is possible that very severe cases of swine flu can lead to pneumonia and death, especially in people who are in poor health.



How do you get swine flu?

Swine flu can be spread from person to person, especially through coughing or sneezing. You can also catch it from touching things that have the virus on it. You cannot get swine flu from eating pork.

How do you prevent swine flu?

There are very simple ways to protect yourself from swine flu. Number one, wash your hands frequently, especially when you are in public places. Stay at least three feet away from anyone who is coughing or sneezing. If someone around you appears sick, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth and any surfaces the

sick person touches until you have a chance to wash your hands. If you start to feel sick, stay home from work and don't go to public places. Then call your health care provider right away to find out if you are at risk for swine flu infection.

If you are living with someone who is experiencing the same symptoms as swine flu, it's important to protect yourself. Until you know for sure whether the person has swine flu, care for yourself by wearing a mask or a protective cloth over your mouth and nose. Wash your hands frequently and don't share dishes, towels or bed sheets with the sick person. As soon as possible, take the sick person to the doctor to find out if either of you is at risk for swine flu.

What to do if you get swine flu

If you start to feel even some of the symptoms of swine flu – fever, cough, fatigue, headache, chills, body aches, sore throat, diarrhea and vomiting – stay home from work or school and out of public places. Limit contact with other people in your home to avoid getting them sick. Make sure to cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze and throw tissues directly into a garbage can and not on other surfaces where the virus can stay. Contact your health care provider right away to find out if you are at risk of infection for swine flu. Two antiviral medications, Tamiflu and Relenza, are effective in reducing the severity of flu symptoms.



Serious symptoms

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that you go immediately to your doctor or local emergency room if you or your children experience any of the following serious symptoms:

Serious symptoms in children:

- Trouble breathing (such as, fast breathing or gasping for air)
- Bluish skin color
- Not wanting to drink fluids
- Not waking up or being unusually tired
- A child not wanting to be held or touched
- Flu-like symptoms that get better, but then come back with fever and severe cough
- Any fever with a rash

Serious symptoms in adults:

- Trouble breathing (such as, fast breathing or gasping for air)
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or non-stop vomiting

Above all, do not panic. Stay calm, take the preventive steps listed above and seek treatment as soon as possible if you feel sick. These are the keys to protecting yourself and your loved ones from swine flu.



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