



## Swine Influenza or H1N1

Swine influenza, also called swine flu, is an illness that mainly affects the lungs. This illness is caused by a virus (germ) that usually infects pigs (swine). The virus has now spread to humans and is easily passed from one person to another.

The swine flu virus can spread from infected pigs to humans that come in contact with them. The virus can then be passed among people the same way the regular flu spreads—through the air in droplets when someone with the virus coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks. You can also become infected when you touch a surface on which the droplets have landed and then transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. You cannot become infected with swine flu from eating pork or pork products that have been properly handled and cooked.

Swine flu symptoms are about the same as regular flu symptoms. These include:

- Fever, usually higher than 101°F, and chills
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Body and muscle aches
- Dry cough
- Runny nose
- Tiredness and weakness
- Diarrhea and vomiting

If swine flu is in your area and your symptoms are severe, your healthcare provider may prescribe medications called antivirals. These must be taken within 2 days of when your symptoms started. Antivirals work by stopping the swine flu virus from reproducing in your body. After taking the medication, your symptoms may be milder and you may recover quicker than without the medication. The medication may also prevent serious complications such as pneumonia.

To ease flu symptoms:

- Drink lots of fluids such as water, juice, and warm soup to prevent dehydration
- Get plenty of rest.
- Ask your healthcare provider about acetaminophen or other medications for fever and pain.
- Call your doctor if your fever rises over 101°F or you become dizzy, lightheaded, or short of breath.

Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of swine flu and other common infections. Follow these steps:

- Use warm water and plenty of soap. Work up a good lather.
- Clean the whole hand, under your nails, between your fingers, and up the wrists.
- Wash for at least 15 seconds. Don't just wipe—scrub well.
- Rinse, letting the water run down your fingers, not up your wrists.
- Dry your hands well. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

**If you would like more information, please contact  
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