

# What You Should Know About SWINE FLU

Swine influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses. Before the current outbreak, people rarely got swine flu, and usually only if they were in very close proximity to infected pigs. However, during the current outbreak, the virus is able to spread from person-to-person. Swine influenza viruses are not transmitted by food—you cannot get swine flu from eating pork or pork products.

## What are the symptoms of swine flu?

Symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to those of seasonal flu and include: fever, fatigue, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

## How does swine flu spread?

Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. **If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.** There is no vaccine available at this time, but the swine flu can be treated with certain antiviral drugs. At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the use of oseltamivir or zanamivir for the treatment and/or prevention of infection with swine influenza viruses. Speak with your health care provider for more information.

## What can you do to stay healthy?

People with swine flu are contagious for up to seven days or longer after the onset of illness, so it is important to take the following steps to prevent spreading the virus to others:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others. Keep your children home from school or daycare when they are sick.
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow or a tissue to cover your nose and mouth. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough, sneeze or care for sick children. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth—this spreads germs.

In addition, there are everyday actions you can take to stay healthy:

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting plenty of rest and exercise.
- Seek care if you have flu-like symptoms.
- If you have a recent history of travel and experience mild, flu-like symptoms, stay home. If you feel your symptoms worsen or become severe, contact your health care provider.

This fact sheet is based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.