



County of San Diego

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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Community Epidemiology
Emergency & Disaster Medical Services
HIV, STD and Hepatitis
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Public Health Laboratory
PH Nursing/Border Health
TB Control & Refugee Health
Vital Records

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San Diego County Office of Education and School Districts:

As you know, swine flu has been detected in several San Diego County residents, several of them children. I want to share with you what the situation is locally, how the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency's Division of Public Health Services is responding and what you can do.

We have been working closely with individual schools where these students attended, to look for other people who might have been exposed to the virus and who became ill. The decision to close a school where cases have been confirmed will be made jointly between Public Health Services and school administrators, under the guidelines issues by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We anticipate that there will be additional cases detected, as we are working with our health care community to enhance surveillance for the disease. Thank you for your continued collaboration with County Public Health Services as we work to protect San Diegans.

Swine Influenza Infection

Swine influenza, while common in pigs, is rarely seen in humans. Prior to these recent cases, there have been twelve swine influenza infections in humans reported in the United States since 2005. Most of these individuals had direct or indirect contact with pigs.

The symptoms of the swine influenza virus infection are similar to those of seasonal influenza. These symptoms include:

- Fever,
- Cough,
- Sore throat,
- Body aches,
- Headache,
- Chills, and
- Fatigue.

Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure), as well as deaths, have been reported with swine flu infection in people. For the confirmed cases here in San Diego County, all of these individuals have had mild disease and have recovered. The annual flu shot does not offer protection against this particular virus.

There are also many people with serious respiratory illnesses, including some deaths, being reported in Mexico. These cases are occurring primarily in the central part of the country. The CDC has also confirmed that some of the samples from Mexico have tested positive for a similar swine flu virus. The illnesses in Mexico have ranged from mild to serious, some resulting in death. What we have learned is that there is evidence of transmission from person-to-person. I encourage everyone to follow the federal government's travel advisory and limit non-essential travel to Mexico.

What You Can Do

- Reassure school staff, students, and families that this is not a pandemic influenza situation. There have currently been limited cases in San Diego, all of whom have had mild symptoms.
- We encourage those with questions or concerns about Swine Influenza to contact 2-1-1.
- For school officials and staff, if you have a particular concern about swine flu, or are concerned about possible exposure in your school, please call the County Public Health Services at (619) 515-6620.
- School personnel who are sick with flu-like symptoms should stay home.
- Students who are ill should stay home while sick.
- If ill individuals see their healthcare providers, samples will likely not be collected to test for swine flu. We are recommending to health care providers that samples to test for swine flu be collected on hospitalized patients, but not from all patients presenting with flu-like symptoms.
- Promote and practice good hand hygiene – wash your hand properly and often.
- Cover your cough – with a tissue, or sneeze into your sleeve.

I want to thank you again for assisting Public Health Services in our efforts to protect the residents of San Diego County. For updates on swine flu please:

- Call 2-1-1
- Visit the County of San Diego Website: www.sdcounty.ca.gov
- Visit the CDC Swine Flu We Page: www.cdc.gov/swineflu
- Read the attached CDC Fact Sheet

Sincerely,



Wilma J. Wooten, M.D., M.P.H.
Public Health Officer