



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wash your hands, don't wring them: Snohomish County remains free of swine flu
Local public health offers update links, online health tips, & recorded info in English and Spanish

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash. -- Local public health officials at Snohomish Health District continue to monitor the emergence of swine influenza. There are no confirmed cases of swine influenza in people in Washington state. As of April 28, there are 64 cases confirmed in Texas, California, New York, Ohio, and Kansas. There have been no deaths from this flu in the United States. Cases also are confirmed in Canada and Mexico. Based on the rapid spread of the virus thus far, public health officials believe that more cases will be identified over the next several weeks. Case counts are updated daily at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

The Health District remains in close communication with the state Department of Health (DOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the outbreak. SHD has advised local health care providers to test people who have flu symptoms and have traveled recently to places where swine flu is present. **CDC recommends that U.S. travelers avoid all nonessential travel to Mexico.** Changes to this recommendation will be posted at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.

If you have symptoms of flu and have traveled recently to the affected states or countries, contact your health care provider to discuss symptoms and the possible need for testing or treatment. Be sure to tell your travel history. There is no vaccine yet. Antiviral drugs (oseltamivir or zanamivir) are prescription medicines that prevent flu viruses from multiplying in your body. If you get sick, antiviral drugs can make your illness milder and make you feel better faster. They may also prevent serious flu complications. For treatment, antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within 2 days of symptoms).

Swine flu is a type A influenza virus found in pigs, but not usually in people. It spreads the way a cold does, not from eating pork. There is no vaccine for it yet. This year's seasonal flu vaccine does not prevent swine flu. This new "swine flu virus" is transmitted person-to-person when people cough and sneeze, spreading germs through the air, or on to surfaces that others touch. Infection occurs when the virus gets into the airways and lungs.

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

Human symptoms for this new type of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal influenza: Fever > 100° F, cough, and sore throat. Some people also report fatigue, body aches, lack of appetite, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. **Call your health care provider; don't go in person unless your provider tells you to do so.**

MORE...

Snohomish Health District Media Release
Future after 50
April 28, 2009
Page 2 of 2

These simple steps WORK to prevent the spread of flu:

- ❖ Cover your cough and sneezes with a tissue. Dispose of the used tissue in the trash.
- ❖ Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer.
- ❖ Avoid contact with sick people.
- ❖ Stay home if you are sick, and limit your contact with other people.

CDC is releasing one-quarter of its antiviral drugs, personal protective equipment, and respiratory protection devices to help states, including Washington, respond to the outbreak. Snohomish Health District will coordinate local distribution to health care providers at the direction of the state if human swine flu is confirmed in Snohomish County.

A recorded message about swine flu in English and Spanish is available by calling 425.339.5266. Also check our Web site for updates: www.snohd.org.

Good sites for the international, national, and state details:

www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html.

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/health/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/>

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentSwineFluMexico.aspx>

Established in 1959, the Snohomish Health District works for a safer and healthier community through disease prevention, health promotion, and protection from environmental threats. Find more information about the Health District at www.snohd.org. ###END###