

April 26, 2009

News media calls to David Hass at (630) 682-7979, ext. 7374.

DuPage County Health Department works with state, CDC, regional health departments on swine flu outbreak

Staff activated Sunday to monitor developments; local health care professionals updated

The DuPage County Health Department is working with the Illinois Department of Public Health, regional health departments and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor the recent swine flu outbreak in an effort to keep DuPage County residents informed of the developing situation.

As of Sunday (April 26) afternoon, there have been 20 cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) in the United States.

The DuPage County Health Department has distributed swine flu information to physicians, hospital emergency rooms, laboratories and infection control practitioners. The health department activated staff on Sunday to monitor all developments. That will continue as the situation unfolds.

Swine influenza, swine flu, is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus. Typically, humans are not infected with swine flu but infections can occur. Human cases typically involve people who have had direct contact with pigs, but the CDC has established human-to-human transmission among these recent cases.

Health officials are working to determine the source of human infection, if additional people have been infected with similar swine flu viruses and to fully assess the health impact of this swine flu virus.

The CDC has confirmed swine flu in patients in Mexico and is working with health officials there. Mexico's Minister of Health believes some of the people who were infected with swine flu have died.

"Many people travel from, to and through Illinois and it is imperative to take precautions and protect against illness," said Dr. Damon Arnold, director of the IDPH. "People who have recently traveled to impacted areas and have flu symptoms need to see a doctor and be tested so we can determine if swine flu is present in Illinois sooner rather than later. Aside from seeking medical attention, these people should stay home if sick."

(More)

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Although currently there are no travel restrictions recommended, the World Health Organization is holding routine meetings and this may change. If you are planning travel to Mexico follow these recommendations to reduce your risk of infection and help you stay healthy.

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/content/SwineFluMexico.aspx>

If you are returning from travel to Mexico, pay close attention to your health for seven days. If you become sick with a fever plus a cough, sore throat or have trouble breathing during this 10-day period, see a doctor. Stay home if you are sick unless it is to get medical care. By limiting contact with others as much as possible, you can help prevent the spread of an infectious illness.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has alerted local health departments, regional offices of IDPH, hospital infection control practitioners, hospital administrators, emergency departments and hospital laboratories throughout the state to make clinicians aware of the possibility of swine influenza virus (SIV) infections as well as seasonal influenza in patients presenting with febrile respiratory illness who have traveled to one of the locations where reported cases have been found (two counties in California, one county in Texas or Mexico) seven days prior to onset of illness (or have been in contact with an ill person who has traveled to the places where reported cases have been found).

Seasonal flu symptoms include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Reported swine flu symptoms also include runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

A seasonal flu shot is not expected to protect against swine flu and therefore the Illinois Department of Public Health recommends taking the following precautions: cover your cough or sneeze, wash your hands frequently, and see your doctor if you have fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. If you get sick, stay home and limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.

Swine flu is not transmitted by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork products, however it is always recommended to thoroughly cook pork to avoid foodborne illness.

CDC has created a webpage with information and updates. Visit www.cdc.gov/flu/swine or call 1-800-CDC-INFO. In Spanish, http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/espanol/swine_espanol.htm

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