

Extension Tip of the Week

Swine Flu

April 27, 2009

NOTE: It is important to keep updated on current recommendations and risk assessment as more is learned about the current outbreak of swine flu. Here is what is known thus far:

Human cases of an influenza A (H1N1) - known swine flu - have been identified in several states and in other countries. This is a new influenza A virus that has not been identified in people before, and human-to-human transmission of the virus appears to be ongoing. Some facts:

- **The current swine flu outbreak is due to human-to human transmission, not swine-to-human transmission.** There is no current swine health crisis due to this influenza.
- The 2009 Swine Flu is a **new** virus that is a mix of viruses. This virus **does not contain** the deadly Highly Pathogenic Avian Flu virus H5N1.
- The **symptoms** of swine flu in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal flu and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- **Is there a vaccine?** Currently, there is **no vaccine** to protect humans from swine flu. The seasonal influenza vaccine will likely help provide partial protection against swine H3N2, but not swine H1N1 viruses.
- **Is Pork safe to eat?** Swine influenza viruses **are not** transmitted by food. You **cannot** get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products are safe. Cooking pork to an internal temperature of 160°F kills the swine flu virus as it does other bacteria and viruses

How to protect yourself and your family? Follow these basic steps of health hygiene:

- **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too
- **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Cover your mouth and nose.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- **Practice other good health habits.** Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

For more information, check the Center for Disease Control Web site information: [Swine Influenza: General Information](#)