



Public Health Division

Mary Maddux-González, MD, MPH
Health Officer & Division Director

Swine Flu: A Guide for Parents
Information for Families Living in Sonoma County

What is swine flu?

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a type of flu usually seen in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can happen. Most human cases of swine flu happen in people who are around pigs but it is possible for swine flu to spread from person to person.

Are people infected with swine flu in Sonoma County?

No. There have been no cases of swine flu reported in Sonoma County. There have been cases reported in California and other parts of the United States. Health officials are watching for any local cases.

Is swine flu contagious?

Yes. Swine flu is contagious and can spread from human to human.

What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?

The symptoms of swine flu are like those of regular seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and tiredness. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting with swine flu. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may make other chronic health problems worse.

How do you catch swine flu?

Spread of swine flu can occur in two ways:

- Through contact with infected pigs or environments contaminated with swine flu.
- Through contact with a person with swine flu. Human-to-human spread of swine flu can occur in the same way as seasonal flu. Influenza is spread mainly through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

How long can an infected person spread swine flu to others?

People with swine flu are likely to be contagious as long as they have flu symptoms and possibly for up to 7 days from when they first become ill. Children, especially younger children, may be contagious longer.

What can I do to protect myself and my family from getting sick?

Everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of flu. Take these steps to protect yourself and your family.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with flu, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

What should I do if someone in my family gets sick?

If you become ill with flu-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, contact your doctor health care provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms or if they are severe. Your doctor will determine whether testing or treatment is needed.

If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others. **Do not send your child to school if he or she is sick.**

Can I get swine flu from eating or preparing pork?

No. Swine flu is not spread by food. You cannot get swine flu from eating pork or pork products.

More information on swine flu can be found at www.cdc.gov/flu/swine, or call 1- 800-CDC-INFO.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE**