



Township of Hillsborough Health Department

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H1 N1 (SWINE FLU) UPDATE

**Last update: June 12, 2009 at 3:30pm*

***NJ HOTLINE NUMBER: 609-588-7500; HILLSBOROUGH HEALTH
DEPARTMENT: 908-369-5652***

H1N1 (SWINE FLU) UPDATE

The NJ Department of Health has advised local health departments that the seasonal flu viruses are diminishing, and that the Influenza A identified in the community at this time is most likely due to the H1N1 flu virus. The World Health Organization has just declared a PANDEMIC, or world wide sustained person to person transmission of the H1N1 Flu, or Swine Flu. There have been 2 confirmed cases in one of our elementary schools, and another confirmed case of a young adult in the community (all are fully recovered). Testing of the school patients was conducted for surveillance purposes due to related reports of flu-like illness in classmates. Testing of the young adult was conducted because the patient was admitted to the hospital. This testing confirms that the H1N1 Virus is present in our community. There is no test that can be done to readmit a patient to school.

Hillsborough and other NJ communities are experiencing more flu-like illness, and due to NJ Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control(CDC) information about flu viruses, along with surveillance testing results, we believe that the H1N1 Flu Virus is circulating, and will spread rapidly since most people are not immune. Although most cases so far have not been severe, it is important to monitor one's health, and those with chronic health conditions should be sure to contact their physicians for further information. There is guidance information for individuals on the cdc website: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu, which addresses various chronic health conditions. It is also advisable to check information from other health organizations that are related to your particular health condition. For example, cancer patients should check the American Cancer Society site, those with Multiple Sclerosis should check information put out by their credible organization.

Since the virus is present in the community, it is important that individuals with flu-like illness stay home. Those with chronic health conditions, or special health conditions such as pregnancy should be cautious. Please check the CDC website: www.cdc.h1n1flu/guidance, and click on public gatherings, which is under the heading “Guidance for Community Settings”.

For everyone, it is important at this time, to be sure that one follows good sanitary procedures, such as covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands, and staying home when sick.

Testing every patient that comes in to the physician’s office with flu-like symptoms is not recommended by the CDC. Only people who have symptoms and are part of a surveillance study will be tested, with few exceptions. There is no test that can be used to disqualify H1N1 in order to be readmitted to school. Doctors also will not recommend antiviral flu medications for patients who don’t fit the criteria set forth by the CDC. Please check the treatment guidance at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu, under “guidance”. You will see that those with severe symptoms and those with chronic illness are advised to be treated.

Swine Flu, or H1N1, is a virus that causes a respiratory illness in pigs. Although Swine Flu doesn’t usually cause illness in humans, there have been instances in the past in which humans have gotten Swine Flu. At this time, this strain of virus, called H1N1, is being more carefully studied, and it has been determined to be a type A influenza virus strain that spreads from person to person, and can cause illness. It usually spreads via coughs, sneezes, and hand contact with contaminated surfaces followed by contact with the eyes, nose, or mouth. The symptoms of Swine Flu in people are similar to seasonal flu and may include:

- Fever (100 degrees F or greater)
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Stuffy nose
- Chills
- Headache and body aches
- Fatigue
- Possibly diarrhea and vomiting

More severe illness is possible, but the majority of cases in the U.S. have been moderate during this outbreak. As with Seasonal Flu, Swine Flu can be more severe in people with chronic conditions.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR:

1. Most affected people will recover without requiring medical care. If you are very sick, or are at risk due to complications, contact your health care provider for advice. Also, please see the information on www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu and press “general information”, then “swine flu and you”. This section covers many of the questions you may have and what to do if you get sick. On the same website, you can also go to “general information”, then “information for parents and caregivers”, or “guidance”.
2. For individuals with other health issues, pregnant women, and young children, get information from your physician, and also go to www.cdc.h1n1flu, and go to “guidance”, where you will find specific information on your situation.

WHAT TO DO TO STOP THE SPREAD OF THIS FLU:

1. WASH HANDS frequently with soap and water. Hand sanitizers also work.
2. COVER COUGHS AND SNEEZES with a tissue, throw the tissue out, and wash hands with soap and water or use sanitizer. Coughing into one’s elbow works well too.
3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
4. Avoid touching your nose, mouth, or eyes to stop the spread of germs from surfaces to the body.
5. If you are ill with flu-like symptoms, avoid contact with others- stay home. Anyone with acute febrile respiratory illness, REGARDLESS OF TRAVEL HISTORY is asked to stay home and not to return to school or anyplace where contact with others can’t be avoided, for at least 7 days, and if symptoms last longer than 7 days, they should not return until 24 hours AFTER symptoms are gone.
6. PREPARE for possible breaches in services. The Hillsborough Township website: www.hillsborough-nj.org has pandemic preparation information, under “departments”, then “health”. Go to the preparedness section. More information on home health care of

- sick individuals can be found at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu, as well as the Hillsborough Health Department website in the preparedness section.
7. KEEP UP WITH LOCAL NEWS: WWW.hillsborough-nj.org, CABLE TV CHANNEL 14 AND 25 AND EMERGENCY RADIO (1610 AM) WILL ALSO HAVE LOCAL INFORMATION- BE AWARE. SCHOOL INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE FOUND ON www.hillsborough.k12.nj.us.

WHAT IS BEING DONE?

1. Physicians have been advised to ask patients who present with flulike symptoms about recent travel or exposure to others who have the flu. Please let your physician know if you are a student or employee of a school or other place where there are others with flulike illness.
2. The Hillsborough Health Department is working closely with the Somerset County Health Department Epidemiologist, the Hillsborough Board of Education, and the school nurses, the community physicians, and the area hospitals. Advisories have been sent to parents or put on the Board of Education website. Advisories have also been sent to Hillsborough Township licensed preschools. These updates change regularly.
3. Schools are taking precautions such as conducting active surveillance of ill students and sending them home, monitoring the reasons for absence, providing more cleaning and sanitizing in common areas of the schools, and teaching children about the importance of good hygiene. According to the Centers for Disease Control, school closure is not being recommended when a student or employee is found to be suspected of having this flu, or confirmed to have it. School closure will be decided by local officials based upon the severity and the number of cases in each local area
4. The Hillsborough Health Department, Hillsborough Office of Emergency Management, Hillsborough Rescue Squad, and the Hillsborough Police Department are in close communication about the situation. There have been education sessions, drills, and plans drawn up to handle an outbreak situation.
5. The Hillsborough Health Department is also in communication with other local health departments in the County and the NJ Department of Health.
6. This flu appears to be similar to seasonal flu in severity, so although it appears to cause less severe illness than first suspected, surveillance

will continue, and you will be updated. Information will be posted on the Hillsborough website.

7. The NJ Department of Health can be reached at 908-588-7500 for questions from physicians and residents.