

Yale UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

Swine Flu: Frequently Asked Questions

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

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu.

How serious is swine flu infection?

Like seasonal flu, swine flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. The current reported cases in the U.S. have been relatively mild.

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 viruses.

Through contact with a person with swine flu. Human-to-human spread of swine flu has been documented also and is thought to occur in the same way as seasonal flu. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

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

Infected people may be able to infect others before they even know they are sick. The virus can be spread a day before any symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. Children, especially younger children, and individuals who are severely ill or have persistent symptoms might be contagious for longer periods.

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine flu. There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

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.

Should I be wearing a face mask to keep from getting sick?

It is not necessary for the general public to use face masks. If you have flu symptoms, however, and go in to see a doctor, you may be asked to wear a mask to keep you from spreading any virus when you cough or sneeze.

I had a flu shot this year. Can I still get swine flu?

The vaccine available this year likely will not protect against the swine flu since it is a new form of the virus that was not available when the current vaccines were produced.

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What should I do if I get sick?

If you have symptoms of the flu (fever, cough, muscle aches) you should call University Health Services (432-0123). The staff will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

I waived coverage in the University Health Plan? Can I still get treatment there?

Yes, students can receive treatment regardless of their hospitalization insurance. We ask any member of the community who does not have coverage at the Yale Health Plan to call if they develop symptoms.

What should I do if I am in another country and feel sick with the flu?

YUHS has a toll free number that can be used when calling from many countries: 877-YHP-CARE (877-947-2273). You should also carry your MEDEX when you are travelling internationally www.yale.edu/finance/controller/riskman/programs/medex.html.