



North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Division of Environmental Health

Beverly Eaves Perdue  
Governor

Terry L. Pierce  
Director

Dee Freeman  
Secretary

**Talking Points: Swine Influenza (H1N1)**

*More information on swine influenza can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>  
(Updated as of April 27, 2009)*

- Human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection have been identified in the United States and internationally. There are 40 confirmed cases in the United States as of April 27. There have been no cases confirmed in North Carolina.
- Investigations are ongoing to look for cases in North Carolina residents.
- Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease caused by type A influenza viruses that causes regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that this swine flu type A virus is contagious; it is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it not known how easily the virus spreads between people.
- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.
- Swine influenza viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly-handled and cooked pork products is safe.
- The symptoms of swine flu among cases reported so far in the United States have been similar to the symptoms of regular human flu. These include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. There are reports of more severe illness among people infected with the same virus in Mexico, but the reason for this difference is not yet known.

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine flu.

- People entering the United States who are experiencing symptoms consistent with swine flu and have traveled to an affected area (see <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm> for affected areas), or have been exposed to someone possibly infected with swine flu, during the past seven days should report their illnesses to their health care provider immediately.
- Seek medical care if you are severely ill (such as having trouble breathing). There are antiviral medications for prevention and treatment of swine flu that a doctor can prescribe. People who have flu-like symptoms but do not require medical care should not go to emergency departments or doctor's offices just for testing. This will reduce chances for transmission in health care settings.
- The following steps can protect your health and help prevent the spread of swine flu:
  - 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.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
  - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
  - If you get sick with influenza, the CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school, and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.