

Concerned about swine flu?

Local public health departments, emergency management agencies, hospitals and many others are closely monitoring the current public health situation related to the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, also known as swine flu. Public officials have plans in place to treat patients and distribute medications should the situation worsen. But right now, there are several key steps you can take 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.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.** Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- **If you are sick, do not go to work or school.** Limit contact with other people to keep from infecting them.

Symptoms of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of regular flu. They include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. If you are concerned that you might have the flu, call your doctor for instructions. If your doctor feels your symptoms might indicate the presence of flu, he or she will swab the inside of your nose and send the swab to a lab for testing. Tests can confirm whether you have the flu, and whether it is ordinary seasonal flu or swine flu. There are antiviral medications available to treat people who are diagnosed with swine flu, but they are most effective when taken within 48 hours of the first symptoms.

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine flu, but the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has begun the process to get a vaccine developed.

For more information about swine flu:

- Visit the CDC web site at www.cdc.gov/swineflu
- In Missouri, go to the Department of Health and Senior Services site at www.dhss.mo.gov
- Internet users can follow the health center on **twitter** as livcohealth and **facebook** as Livingston County Health Center for updated information as well.



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