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The Department of Health and Human Services today (Monday, April 27, 2009) issued a nationwide public health emergency declaration in response to recent human infections with a newly discovered swine influenza A (swine flu) virus.

Quick Facts about the Swine Flu

- Swine Influenza (swine flu or influenza type A) is a respiratory disease of pigs that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza within swine populations.
- Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans however, it is confirmed that this virus is now being transmitted from human to human. In the United States there have been 40 confirmed cases of H1N1 in five states. Mexico is reporting the most cases followed by the U.S., Canada and Central America.
- There is no vaccine to protect humans from swine flu and the seasonal influenza vaccine does not protect against this virus.
- Swine influenza is not contracted from eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products are safe. Cooking pork to an internal temperature of 160°F kills the swine flu virus as it does other bacteria and viruses.
- The virus is responding to antibiral treatment when detected early.
- This is not the Avian Flu.

Symptoms of Swine flu in Humans:

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Stuffy nose
- Chills
- Headache and body aches
- Fatigue
- Some people have reported nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Spread Prevention Tips:

- Avoid contact with ill persons.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with an antibacterial soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth .
- If you think you are ill with flu: Avoid close contact with others as much possible, stay home from work or school and seek immediate medical care if your symptoms include difficulty breathing and sudden fever.

Interim CDC Recommended Treatment are the neurominidase inhibitors;

- Oseltamivir/Tamiflu or;
- Zanamivir /Rellenza
- The most recent swine influenza viruses isolated from humans are resistant to amantadine and rimantadine.

Farmworkers and their families maybe at higher risk for Swine Influenza:

- Over 80% of farmworkers nationwide come from Mexico, with others coming from Central America and Haiti.
- Seasonal farmworkers from Texas, Florida, and Georgia also follow the migrate through the Mid-Atlantic's fields.
- Over 90% of these workers do not speak English and may speak an indigenous language
- Literacy among these workers is also low.
- Farmworkers and their families commonly live in very close quarters: in barrack style housing, trailers, and/or old farm houses.
- Sanitary conditions at migrant housing are often limited with limited access to inside plumbing, bathrooms, showers, and laundry facilities for hygienic purposes.

Sources and other links:

Guidance for clinicians: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance/>

800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, 24 Hours/Every Day - cdcinfo@cdc.gov

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