



Swine Flu Investigation

Background

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) continues to work with local public health officials, state agency partners and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to investigate swine flu in the United States. The CDC lab confirmed the first swine flu result from California late on April 17, 2009.

Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans; however, sporadic human infections with swine flu occasionally do occur. The symptoms of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu seen each year and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also report runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

This strain of swine flu is a novel virus, meaning the virus has not been reported previously. This means humans have not built up immunity to this virus. There is no evidence at this time that the current seasonal flu vaccine would provide any protection against this novel strain.

Current Situation

United States

64 cases of swine flu have been confirmed in humans in the United States in the past two weeks.

State	# of laboratory confirmed cases
California	10
Kansas	2
New York	45
Ohio	1
Texas	6
Total	64

In all cases, the viruses are genetically related, and the interval between identification of these cases suggests person-to-person transmission in the community. The cases in Texas as well as the rest of the nation have been reported to be generally mild disease. There is a high probability of additional confirmed cases in Texas as well as in other states.

Three of the CDC confirmed Texas cases are from Guadalupe County near San Antonio. The other three confirmed cases are from the Dallas area.

International

As of April 27, the Government of Mexico had reported 26 laboratory confirmed cases of swine influenza A. Previous reports in the news media had as many as 1,000 cases of flu-like illness and just over 100 deaths. Investigation is continuing to clarify the spread and severity of the disease in Mexico. Suspect clinical cases have been reported in 19 of Mexico's 32 states.

Additional cases are now being reported in different parts of the world: Canada – 6; Spain – 1; Scotland – 2.

Public Health Activities

- The State of Texas is actively working with many federal, state and local partners to fully investigate the known cases, identify new cases, and prevent the spread of disease.
- DSHS and local health officials continue to actively investigate all suspected cases, including laboratory testing for confirmation, treating those who are ill, and conducting follow-up with their contacts.
- CDC has issued recommendations for community mitigation to reduce the spread of the virus.
- Antivirals are being provided as appropriate. The virus, although resistant to some antiviral medications, is sensitive to the antiviral medications stockpiled in the U.S. and here in Texas.
- DSHS has developed Texas specific information using CDC guidance to provide local health departments, health care providers, nursing homes, first responders and others with information on a variety of topics, such as Guidance for Clinicians, Laboratory Testing Protocol, Guidance for Antiviral Use, and Guidance for Congregate Facilities.
- DSHS has been providing information to health care providers through the Texas Medical Association, the Texas Hospital Association, the Texas Association of Local Health Officials, the Texas Osteopathic Medicine Association, the Texas Nurses Association, and the Texas Association of Community Health Centers.
- The web site address for information about swine flu is:
 - <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/swineflu>
 - This web site also links to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- A call center was established for the general public and for health care providers:
 - The purpose of the call center is to answer questions about the outbreak, particularly focusing on Guadalupe County.
 - The number for the public is: 888-777-5320
 - The number for health care providers is: 877-623-6274

Health Precautions

DSHS is urging individuals to follow good hygiene precautions to reduce the spread of any respiratory illness:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.