

Swine Flu update from PTH 29.04.09

What is Swine Flu?

Swine flu is a respiratory disease caused by influenza type A (H1N1) virus infection, (Health Protection Agency (HPA), 2009) which infects pigs. It can be spread through coughing and sneezing.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms are similar to those of the usual human seasonal influenza infection: upper respiratory tract infection, fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle and joint aches, headache, and sometimes diarrhoea and vomiting.

Is it safe to eat pork and pork products?

Yes, swine flu has not been shown to be transmissible to people through eating properly handled and prepared pork or other products derived from pigs. The swine influenza virus is killed by cooking temperatures 160°F / 70°C, corresponding to the general guidance for the preparation of pork and other meat.

How can I protect myself from getting swine influenza from infected people?

General preventable measures are:

- Avoid close contact with people who appear to be unwell and who have fever and a cough.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and thoroughly.
- Practice good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food and keeping physically active.

What should I do if I think I have swine influenza?

The Health Protection Agency strongly advises that if you suspect that you have Swine flu to contact your doctor by telephone, explain why you think you have swine flu (e.g. if you have recently travelled to a country where there is a swine influenza outbreak in humans). **DO NOT** go into the surgery and stay at home to minimise spread.

For further information and sources please visit the following websites:

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&Page&HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1240732817665?p=1240732817665>

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/>

<http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/advice/disease-prevention/swine-influenza.aspx>

http://www.who.int/csr/swine_flu/swine_flu_faq.pdf

<http://www.patient.co.uk/>