

Swine Flu Facts in Brief

The Swine Influenza (H1N1) virus is and has been a big news item in the last week. Listed below are main things to consider and know regarding this virus.

- Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Like all influenza viruses, swine flu viruses change constantly. Pigs can be infected by avian influenza and human influenza viruses as well as swine influenza viruses. When influenza viruses from different species infect pigs, the viruses change by swapping genes and new viruses that are a mix of swine, human and/or avian influenza viruses can emerge. The current swine flu outbreak is due to human-to-human transmission, not swine to humans.
- Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans. However, sporadic human infections with swine flu have occurred. Most commonly, these cases occur in persons with direct exposure to pigs (e.g. children near pigs at a fair or workers in the swine industry).
- The symptoms of swine flu in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal flu and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Symptoms may take 1-7 days to appear in infected individuals. If you have mild flu symptoms, it is best to call your health care provider and ask questions before going to the doctor's office. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.
- Is Pork safe to eat? Swine influenza viruses are not transmitted by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. 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.
- Is there a vaccine? Vaccines are available to be given to pigs to prevent swine influenza. There is no vaccine at this time to protect humans from swine flu. The seasonal influenza vaccine will likely help provide partial protection against swine H3N2, but not swine H1N1 viruses.
- Health Habits to Stop the Flu:

Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Resources:

SD Cooperative Extension Service: National Preparedness --<http://sdces.sdstate.edu/prepare/>
Extension Disaster Education Network – Influenza Issue Page -- <http://www.eden.lsu.edu/>

NEWS RELEASE

Horse Owners Seminar

There will be a Horse Owners Seminar Series held in three locations in May. Topics will include, horse nutrition, horse health issues, pasture management, and horse management made easy. Speakers include Rebecca Bott, Extension Equestrian Specialist at SDSU, and Extension Educators Jeff Lounsbery, John Keimig, and Leah Burnison.

May 19th is the date scheduled for the Seminar in Hutchinson County. It will be held at the Pony Creek Steakhouse in Parkston. On May 21st, it will be held at the Crooks community center in Crooks, SD. The last one, on May 27th, will be held at the Clay County 4-H Center in Vermillion. The Seminar will consist of the same material at all three locations.

The program will be starting at 6:30pm at all three locations and there will be a \$5.00 registration fee. Pre-Registration is required. Please call the corresponding counties extension office to pre-register. Deadline for pre-registration is the day prior to each seminar.

Contact info: Hutchinson County Extension – 605-387-4205, Lincoln County Extension – 605-764-2756, Clay County Extension – 605-677-7111.