

All Saints Academy
Swine Flu Q & A
FOR ASA STAFF AND PARENTS

Information on Swine Influenza

Updated 4-30-09

What is swine influenza?

Swine flu is a respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses that regularly cause outbreaks in pigs. There have been reports of serious illness and deaths due to swine flu in Mexico, but the recently confirmed cases in the United States have been mild.

What are the symptoms of swine influenza?

Swine flu symptoms are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, lethargy, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu.

Is it safe for a child to attend school?

So far, no one at All Saints Academy has been reported to be infected with this virus. There is no reason for anyone else to keep healthy children at home. If a child has fever or a respiratory illness they should be kept home from school until they have recovered. Students may need to be seen by a health care provider.

Is swine influenza treatable?

Yes. Antiviral drugs work best if started soon after getting sick (within 2 days of symptoms). It is particularly important for people who have severe illness and for those with underlying illness (such as diabetes, heart, or lung disease) to be treated.

How does swine influenza spread?

Swine flu viruses can be directly transmitted from pigs to people and from people to pigs. Human-to-human transmission is also possible, and appears to be occurring with this outbreak. Spread is mainly through coughing or sneezing. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How can I protect myself from swine influenza?

Here are the best ways to avoid getting or spreading swine influenza:

- Encourage all people to cover their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick, limit contact with others to avoid infecting them.

These are the same protections as those for seasonal flu and many other respiratory infections.

Will a student get an excused absence from school if they have swine flu?

Yes. Documented sickness is an excused absence.

What should I do if a school employee has flu symptoms?

The person should go home and not return to school until 1-2 days after they become symptom free.

ASA is taking the following actions to prevent an outbreak.

Cleaning horizontal surface areas where germs could be found with hospital/institutional-grade disinfectant; school personnel are reinforcing with students proper hygiene practices such as frequent hand washing, sneezing and coughing into the crook/elbow, and or tissues and then properly disposing of tissues and students and staff members who feel ill are being encouraged to be evaluated by a nurse or doctor.

What if my child or I become ill?

Anyone who becomes ill with flu-like symptoms should stay home and should avoid contact with other people. Contact your healthcare provider, especially if you are concerned by symptoms. Stay hydrated, get lots of rest, properly dispose of tissues and wash contaminated surfaces. Monitor symptoms for warning signs of serious illness such as difficulty breathing, severe lethargy/confusion, and persistent vomiting. Children also should be watched for fever with a rash, extreme irritability, or symptoms that improve then return with fever and worse cough.

Additional information:

[http:// www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general_info.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general_info.htm)

[http:// www.columbuspandemicflu.com](http://www.columbuspandemicflu.com)

References: (Centers for Disease Control www.CDC.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm, Columbus Public Health <http://www.publichealth.columbus.gov/>) and the Ohio Department of Health <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/>.