

Health Alert

To: Winnebago County Area Medical Professionals

From: J. Maichle Bacon, Administrator
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RE: **Swine Influenza**

As you are aware, human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection have been identified in the United States, but no confirmed cases have been identified in Illinois.

Physicians in Winnebago County should consider the possibility of swine influenza virus (SIV) infections as well as seasonal influenza in patients presenting with febrile respiratory illness who:

- Have traveled to an area where human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) have been identified or
- Have been in contact with ill individuals from affected areas in the 7 days prior to their illness onset

Reporting and Specimen Collection

If swine flu is suspected, physicians should obtain a sample from the posterior nasopharynx and not the throat, using Dacron swabs. Viral transport media should be used. Once collected, the physician should contact the Winnebago County Health Department **immediately** to report the suspect case and facilitate transport and timely diagnosis to the state public health laboratory. In addition to the infection control recommendations below, when collecting respiratory specimens from an ill confirmed or suspected SIV case, the following is recommended:

1. Personal protective equipment: fit-tested disposable N95 respirator [if unavailable, wear a medical (surgical mask)], disposable gloves, gown, and goggles.
2. When completed, place all PPE in a biohazard bag for appropriate disposal.
3. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel.

Infectious Period

Persons with swine influenza virus infection should be considered potentially contagious for up to 7 days following illness onset. Persons who continue to be ill longer than 7 days after illness onset should be considered potentially contagious until symptoms have resolved. Children, especially younger children, could be contagious for longer periods.

Case Definitions

A *confirmed case* of swine influenza virus infection (SIV) is defined as a person with an acute respiratory illness with laboratory confirmed SIV at CDC by one or more of the following tests:

1. real-time RT-PCR
2. viral culture
3. four-fold rise in SIV specific neutralizing antibodies

A *suspected case* of SIV is defined as a person with an acute respiratory illness who was a close contact to a confirmed case of SIV infection while the case was ill, or is an acutely ill person (acute respiratory illness) with a recent history of contact with an animal with confirmed or suspected SIV infection. *Close contact* is defined as: within about 6 feet of an ill person who is a confirmed case of swine influenza A virus infection.

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Infection Control Measures

Recommended Infection Control for a non-hospitalized patient (ER, clinic or home visit):

1. Separation from others in single room if available until asymptomatic. If the ill person needs to move to another part of the house, they should wear a mask. The ill person should be encouraged to wash hands frequently and follow respiratory hygiene practices. Cups and other utensils used by the ill person should be thoroughly washed with soap and water before use by other persons.

Recommended Infection Control for a *hospitalized* patient:

1. Standard, Droplet and Contact precautions for 7 days after illness onset or until symptoms have resolved.
2. In addition, personnel should wear N95 respirators when entering the patient room.
3. Use an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR) with negative pressure air handling, if available; otherwise use a single patient room with the door kept closed.
4. For suctioning, bronchoscopy, or intubation, use a procedure room with negative pressure air handling.

Recommended PPE for personnel providing clinical care to *ill individuals*:

1. Disposable gown, gloves, goggles, N95 respirator.

Antiviral Treatment

Antiviral treatment for confirmed or suspected ill case of swine influenza virus infection may include either oseltamivir or zanamavir. Initiate treatment as soon as possible after the onset of symptoms.

Antiviral Chemoprophylaxis

Antiviral chemoprophylaxis can be considered for close contacts of a confirmed or highly suspected case of swine influenza virus infection, in consultation with public health authorities. Close contact is defined as: within about 6 feet of an ill person who is a confirmed case of swine influenza A virus infection (e.g. post-exposure chemoprophylaxis following unprotected close exposure). Duration of antiviral chemoprophylaxis is 7 days after the last known exposure.

The Winnebago County Health Department Center for Health Protection and Promotion is available as a resource for additional information to answer questions and specimen collection and to take suspected reports. We appreciate your commitment to improving the health of our community. If we can assist you, please contact us at (815) 720-4050.

Additional Resources

www.cdc.gov/flu/swine

www.idph.state.il.us

www.wchd.org