

# Swine Flu F.A.Q.



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Visit <http://cdc.gov/swineflu> for updates as more information becomes available.

In spite of the public panic over “swine” flu, information is still the most important protection against any illness. At this point, stories coming out of Mexico and abroad are confusing and distorted by the media. Experts and scientists all over the world are studying the virus, and a Harvard Medical physician recently stated, “We now believe that swine flu may have mutated to a LESS severe form in North America.”

Here are some more “swine” flu FAQs to help ease your mind:

## **What is swine flu?**

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is an upper respiratory illness in pigs caused by type A influenza viruses. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen. Symptoms of swine flu are the same as typical flu symptoms.

## **How does it spread?**

Human infection with flu viruses from pigs are most likely to occur when people are in close proximity to infected pigs, such as in pig barns and livestock exhibits housing pigs at fairs. Swine flu viruses have been reported to spread from person-to-person through coughing or sneezing, but in the past, this transmission was limited and not sustained beyond three people.

## **How is it treated?**

Most US swine flu patients have made full recoveries without needing any treatment. Only one in the first 20 US cases required hospitalization, and that individual has made a full recovery. If medication is necessary, two antiviral agents are effective in treating swine flu: Tamiflu and Relenza. The US Government has just released a very large number of reserve doses of Tamiflu for use by the public if needed, so there should be plenty.

## **Can I still eat pork products?**

Yes. Swine influenza viruses are not spread by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork products is safe.

## **How can I prevent swine flu?**

Below is information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### **Everyday actions to stay healthy.**

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- Try not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.