

## **Swine Flu Symptoms and Advisory**

1. If your child has any flu-like symptoms, it may be the Swine flu. The symptoms of this virus are like many others. Monitor their symptoms and look for a high fever over 101 degrees following a cold. Worsening cough is also a sign of Swine Flu. If you are treating your child for flu, and their cough worsens, it is a symptom of the virus.

### **2. Look for a Rash**

Look for a rash that accompanies the fever. This is an indication of Swine Flu infection. The child may also have a blue color to their skin. This indicates a lack of oxygen and requires immediate emergency care.

### **3. Stops Drinking**

If your child quits drinking fluids do not hesitate to rush them to the emergency room. Dehydration is a killer for young children. In addition, if they have explosive diarrhea or vomiting you should seek immediate emergency treatment.

### **4. Breathing Problems**

If they appear to be breathing quickly or having any shortness of breath, get them help quickly. The faster you get emergency help in this situation, the more likely they will suffer no adverse affects.

### **5. Body Aches**

If they act as if they are in pain when you hold them, or try to wriggle away because they appear uncomfortable, it could indicate severe body pain. Get them to a treatment facility immediately. This is an indication of a Swine Flu virus infection.

### **6. Flat Affect**

If they are not maintaining eye contact, or appear flat in affectation this is a warning sign of severe viral infection. Get to an emergency facility.

### **7. Will Not Wake Up**

Finally, if you are unable to wake your child, call an ambulance immediately. Do not hesitate in this situation. Swine Flu is a deadly virus and can be treated with antiviral medications such as Tamiflu so getting your child treated immediately can save your child's life. The Swine Flu epidemic is likely to get worse before it gets better and it is important to be aware of symptoms of the virus that may require emergency care.

## Q&A of Swine Flu

*What can I do to protect myself from catching influenza A(H1N1)?*

The main route of transmission of the new influenza A(H1N1) virus seems to be similar to seasonal influenza, via droplets that are expelled by speaking, sneezing or coughing. You can prevent getting infected by avoiding close contact with people who show influenza-like symptoms (trying to maintain a distance of about 1 metre if possible) and taking the following measures:

\*avoid touching your mouth and nose;

clean hands thoroughly with soap and water, or cleanse them with an alcohol-based hand rub on a regular basis (especially if touching the mouth and nose, or surfaces that are potentially contaminated);

\*avoid close contact with people who might be ill;

\*reduce the time spent in crowded settings if possible;

\*improve airflow in your living space by opening windows;

\*practise good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping

Physically active.

\*What about using a mask? What does WHO recommend?

If you are not sick you do not have to wear a mask.

If you are caring for a sick person, you can wear a mask when you are in close contact with the ill person and dispose of it immediately after contact, and cleanse your hands thoroughly afterwards.

If you are sick and must travel or be around others, cover your mouth and nose.

Using a mask correctly in all situations is essential. Incorrect use actually increases the chance of spreading infection.

*\*How do I know if I have influenza A(H1N1)?*

You will not be able to tell the difference between seasonal flu and influenza A(H1N1) without medical help. Typical symptoms to watch for are similar to seasonal viruses and include fever, cough, headache, body aches, sore throat and runny nose. Only your medical practitioner and local health authority can confirm a case of influenza A(H1N1).

*\*What should I do if I think I have the illness?*

If you feel unwell, have high fever, cough or sore throat:  
stay at home and keep away from work, school or crowds;  
rest and take plenty of fluids; cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing and, if using tissues, make sure you dispose of them carefully.  
Clean your hands immediately after with soap and water or cleanse them with an alcohol-based hand rub;

If you do not have a tissue close by when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth as much as possible with the crook of your elbow;

Use a mask to help you contain the spread of droplets when you are around others, but be sure to do so correctly;

inform family and friends about your illness and try to avoid contact with other people;

If possible, contact a health professional before traveling to a health facility to discuss whether a medical examination is necessary.

*\* Should I take an antiviral now just in case I catch the new virus?*

No. You should only take an antiviral, such as oseltamivir or zanamivir, if your health care provider advises you to do so. Individuals should not buy medicines to prevent or fight this new influenza without a prescription, and they should exercise caution in buying antivirals over the Internet.

*\*What about breastfeeding? Should I stop if I am ill?*

No, not unless your health care provider advises it. Studies on other influenza infections show that breastfeeding is most likely protective for babies - it passes on helpful maternal immunities and lowers the risk of respiratory disease. Breastfeeding provides the best overall nutrition for babies and increases their defense factors to fight illness.

*\* When should someone seek medical care?*

A person should seek medical care if they experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or if a fever continues more than three days. For parents with a young child who is ill, seek medical care if a child has fast or labored breathing, continuing fever or convulsions (seizures).

Supportive care at home - resting, drinking plenty of fluids and using a pain reliever for aches - is adequate for recovery in most cases. (A non-aspirin pain reliever should be used by children and young adults because of the risk of Reye's syndrome.)

Should I go to work if I have the flu but am feeling OK?

No. Whether you have influenza A(H1N1) or a seasonal influenza, you should stay home and away from work through the duration of your symptoms. This is a precaution that can protect your work colleagues and others.

*\*Can I travel?*

If you are feeling unwell or have symptoms of influenza, you should not travel. If you have any doubts about your health, you should check with your health care provider

The Union Government has identified the Communicable Disease Hospital, 87, T.H. Road, Tondiarpet, as the isolation facility, specifically for testing suspected swine flu patients in Chennai. The government has set up a screening facility at the Chennai International Airport for all the inbound passengers to prevent the spread of H1N1. Doctors from the Hospital are round the clock screening the passengers at the Airport.

Key Contact center for Swine Flu in Tamil Nadu

1.Communicable Disease Hospital, 87, T.H. Road,Tondiarpet, Chennai, Tamil Nadu {Isolation Facility} [Dr. Lakshmi- 044-25912688. M- 09841250567]

2.Annal Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Puthur, Trichy-17, Tamil Nadu {Isolation and Critical care} [Dr. Veerapande – 09443913446]

3.Dist. Headquarter Hospital, Mannapari {Isolation Facility} [Dr. Veerapande – 09443913446]

4.Coimbatore Medical College Hospital, Trichy Road, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu {Isolation and Critical care} [Dr. Kumaran – 09442012555]

5.Swine Flu Help line Chennai- 044 - 2432 1569

A confirmed case of swine flu infection is a person with an acute respiratory illness with laboratory confirmed swine flu infection by one or more of the following tests:

Real-time RT-PCR

Viral culture

· Two laboratories in Tamil Nadu — Kings Institute of Preventive Medicine and Christian Medical College, Vellore — and JIPMER in Puducherry are authorised to screen people for the infection. Throat swabs will be sent to the National Institute of Communicable Diseases, New Delhi and the National Institute of Virology, Pune, for verification.

More information can be found in the following links:

1. [www.mohfw.nic.in](http://www.mohfw.nic.in) and [www.nicd.nic.in](http://www.nicd.nic.in)
2. <http://www.swinefluindia.com>
3. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009\\_flu\\_pandemic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2009_flu_pandemic)
4. [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently\\_asked\\_questions/what/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently_asked_questions/what/en/index.html)
5. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=103506962>
6. [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4933047\\_flu-symptoms-baby-young-child.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4933047_flu-symptoms-baby-young-child.html)

*Source: From various sources*