



# HEALTH SYSTEM

## Swine Flu: A Guide for Families in San Mateo County Frequently Asked Questions

### What is swine flu?

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a type of flu usually seen in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can happen. Most human cases of swine flu happen in people who are around pigs but it is possible for swine flu to spread from person to person.

### Are people infected with swine flu in San Mateo County?

No. There have been no cases of swine flu reported in San Mateo County. There have been cases reported in California and other parts of the United States. Health officials are watching for any local cases.

### Is swine flu contagious?

Yes. Swine flu is contagious and can spread from human to human.

### What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?

The symptoms of swine flu are like those of regular seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and tiredness. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting with swine flu. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may make other chronic health problems worse.

### How do you catch swine flu?

Spread of swine flu can occur in two ways:

- Through contact with infected pigs or environments contaminated with swine flu.
- Through contact with a person with swine flu. Human-to-human spread of swine flu can occur in the same way as seasonal flu. Influenza is spread mainly through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

### How long can an infected person spread swine flu to others?

People with swine flu are likely to be contagious as long as they have flu symptoms and possibly for up to 7 days from when they first become ill. Children, especially younger children, may be contagious longer.

**Board of Supervisors:** Mark Church • Rose Jacobs Gibson • Richard S. Gordon • Carole Groom • Adrienne Tissier

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<http://www.smhealth.org>

### **What can I do to protect myself and my family from getting sick?**

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of flu. Take these steps to protect yourself and your family.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. Cough or sneeze into your arm.
- 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 with flu, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

### **What should I do if someone in my family gets sick?**

If you become ill with flu-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, contact your health care provider if your symptoms are severe, such as trouble breathing. Your doctor will determine whether testing or treatment is needed.

If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.

### **Can I get swine flu from eating or preparing pork?**

No. Swine flu is not spread by food. You cannot get swine flu from eating pork or pork products.

More information on swine flu can be found at [www.smhealth.org/swineflu](http://www.smhealth.org/swineflu), or at [www.cdc.gov/flu/swine](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine), or call 1- 800-CDC-INFO, or at [www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov).

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CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION  
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## **La influenza porcina (gripe porcina): Información para personas que viven en el Condado de San Mateo**

### **¿Qué es la gripe porcina**

La gripe porcina es un tipo de gripe que afecta a los cerdos. Por lo general, las personas no se contagian con gripe porcina, pero si puede ocurrir. La mayoría de los casos humanos de gripe porcina ocurren en personas que están en cerca proximidad a los cerdos y es posible que la gripe porcina se transmita de persona a persona.

### **¿Hay personas infectadas con la gripe porcina en el Condado de San Mateo?**

No. Casos humanos de la infección de la gripe porcina no han sido reportados en el Condado de San Mateo. Sin hay casos reportados en California y en otra partes de los Estados Unidos. Los oficiales de salud están vigilando la situación local.

### **¿La gripe porcina es contagioso?**

Si. La gripe porcina es contagioso y puede transmitirse de persona a persona.

### **¿Cuáles son los signos y síntomas de la gripe porcina en las personas?**

Los síntomas de la gripe porcina son similares a los síntomas de la gripe común que incluyen fiebre, tos, dolor de garganta, dolores en el cuerpo, dolor de cabeza, escalofríos y fatiga. Algunas personas han reportado síntomas de diarrea y vómito asociados a la gripe porcina. Igual que la gripe común, la gripe porcina puede agravar problemas de salud crónicas.

### **¿Cómo se transmite la gripe porcina?**

Hay dos maneras que se transmite la gripe porcina:

- A través de contacto con cerdos infectados o con ambientes contaminados con la gripe porcina.
- A través de contacto con una persona infectada con la gripe porcina. Transmisión de la gripe porcina de persona a persona puede ocurrir de la misma manera que ocurre la gripe común. La gripe se transmite cuando una persona enferma tose o estornuda.

### **¿Por cuánto tiempo puede una persona infectada propagar la influenza a otras?**

Se debe considerar que las personas infectadas por el virus de la gripe porcina son potencialmente contagiosas mientras manifiesten síntomas y posiblemente hasta 7 días después de que aparezcan los mismos. Los niños, especialmente los más pequeños, pueden ser más contagiosos durante periodos más largos.

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### ¿Qué puedo hacer para proteger mi salud y a mi familia?

Hay medidas que usted puede tomar diariamente para ayudar a prevenir la transmisión de la gripe. Siga estos pasos todos los días para proteger su salud y a su familia:

- Cúbrase la boca y la nariz con un pañuelo desechable al toser o estornudar. Bote el pañuelo a la basura después de usarlo. Tosa o estornude en la manga de su camisa.
- Lávese las manos frecuentemente con agua y jabón, especialmente después de toser o estornudar. Los desinfectantes para manos a base de alcohol también son eficaces.
- Trate de evitar el contacto cercano con personas enfermas.
- Si se enferma con la gripe, quédese en casa, no vaya al trabajo o a la escuela y limite el contacto con otras personas para evitar infectarlas.
- Trate de no tocarse los ojos, la nariz ni la boca. Esta es la manera en que se propagan los gérmenes.

### ¿Qué debo hacer si me enfermo o alguien en mi familia se enferma?

Si usted se enferma con síntomas de la gripe incluyendo fiebre, tos, dolor de garganta, dolores en el cuerpo, dolor de cabeza, escalofríos y fatiga, o diarrea o vomito, contacte a su proveedor de salud medica si sus síntomas son graves, como dificultad al respirar.

Si esta enfermo, debe mantenerse en casa y evitar el contacto con otras personas lo más posible para detener el contagio a otras personas.

### ¿Me puede dar gripe porcina por comer o preparar carne de cerdo?

No. La gripe porcina no se transmite por la comida. No puede contagiarse con la gripe porcina al comer puerco e otros productos de puerco

Para más información visite: [www.smhealth.org/swineflu](http://www.smhealth.org/swineflu) o [www.cdc.gov/flu/swine](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine), o llame la Línea de Información de Emergencia de Salud: (650) 372-8572

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# HEALTH SYSTEM

April 27, 2009

Dear School Official,

There are no confirmed cases of swine flu in San Mateo County at this time. However, the potential for the disease to be here and spread is being taken very seriously. Governments at every level—national, state and local—are working together to keep information current and to insure that medical staff and supplies are available where needed. We are asking schools and districts to take the following steps:

- 1) **Communicate with parents** about this situation reminding them to keep children who are sick at home and contact their health care provider – see attached Frequently Asked Questions and sample letters for parents.
- 2) **Send sick children home** particularly those with fever.
- 3) **Check the following websites and phone numbers** for additional information and updates in English and Spanish about the situation in San Mateo and the U.S.  
**[smhealth.org/swineflu](http://smhealth.org/swineflu)**  
**[cdc.gov/flu/swine](http://cdc.gov/flu/swine)**  
**San Mateo County Health Emergency Line (650) 372-8572**

We will be keeping you updated as we have new, relevant information for schools. In the meantime, please continue to check our website at [www.smhealth.org/swineflu](http://www.smhealth.org/swineflu) daily for the next several weeks. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Scott Morrow, MD, MPH  
San Mateo County Health Officer

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