



City of Oshkosh
Health Services Division
215 Church Avenue
PO Box 1130
Oshkosh WI 54903-1130

April 29, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Oshkosh Health Services Division is working with Wisconsin Division of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor the swine flu situation closely. We have and will continue to be in communication with Oshkosh Area School District and private schools within the City of Oshkosh.

As of 10:00 a.m., Thursday, April 30, there are no confirmed cases of swine flu in the City of Oshkosh. The State of Wisconsin currently has three probable cases. The number of cases is expected to rise because health officials are pursuing very active surveillance.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal human influenza (flu) and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. Some of the cases have also reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu.

Spread of this swine flu illness is thought to be happening in the same way seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Infected people may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick.

Right now there is no vaccine for swine flu, but there are some everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illness like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your mouth or nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Cough or sneeze into the elbow area of your shirtsleeve if a cough or sneeze catches you off guard.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water**, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners are effective in reducing the amount of germs on your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. This is one way to spread germs.

- The Division of Public Health is encouraging avoiding smoking or quitting smoking altogether as a way to avoid getting sick, and to help prevent complications that could occur with an influenza virus.
- Try to avoid close contact (6 feet or less) with sick people.
- If you get sick, the CDC recommends you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others, even in your own home, to keep from infecting them.

If you feel you may be ill with swine flu, contact your physician's office to discuss it with them before going in. They will want to gather more information about your illness.

Public Health is not recommending that schools be closed within the Oshkosh area at this time. **If you have a sick child, we are requesting that you DO NOT send your child to school, and keep them away from others as much as possible.** If requested, provide information to the school about your child's symptoms.

Media sources for updated information about swine flu:

Local Information:

www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us

Oshkosh Community Media

CitiCable 10, CATV 2, WOCT 101.9 FM Radio

State Information:

www.pandemic.wi.gov

National Information:

www.cdc.gov/swineflu

Anytime is a good time to prepare for an emergency. Included is information about how individuals and families can prepare for a pandemic. This information can also be found at: www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/individuals.pdf.

Sincerely,

Paul Spiegel

Paul Spiegel

Director

Oshkosh Health Services Division