



Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans

To: Minnesota School Superintendents
From: Ruth Lynfield, MD State Epidemiologist
Date: Monday, April 27, 2009
Subject: Swine Influenza

As you likely are aware, human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection have been identified in the United States. A number of the identified cases have been school-aged children. As precautionary measures, a school in New York City and a school in Texas where cases were identified among students have closed for a temporary period.

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has increased surveillance including testing of patients who are being evaluated for influenza-like illness. Minnesota has not identified a swine influenza case to date.

MDH is not recommending any school closures at this time. The situation may change if we identify cases among school-aged children. At this time we recommend that you emphasize basic infection prevention measures with your staff and students. These measures include:

- covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- washing your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- staying home when you are sick.

In addition, we recommend that you stay in regular contact with local health officials and report to them if you have students with flu-like symptoms who have been to Mexico or to parts of the U.S. with confirmed cases of swine influenza, or students who have had contact with sick persons who had been to one of the areas with confirmed cases of swine influenza.

The situation with swine flu is rapidly evolving and we expect more information will be forthcoming. We are committed to keeping schools informed and will continue to work with the Department of Education to provide up to the date information. We are also continually updating our website at www.health.state.mn.us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact MDH at 651-201-5414 or 1-877-676-5414.