

**NEWS FROM THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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**Montana Reports First Probable Case of H1N1 (Swine)  
Influenza in State**

Today the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and Riverstone Health, Yellowstone County's local public health organization, reported the first probable case of H1N1 (swine) influenza in the state.

The case involves a Yellowstone County adult male. The patient was not hospitalized and is currently recovering.

A specimen from this individual has been sent by the DPHHS Public Health Laboratory to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for further testing to confirm H1N1 (swine) influenza. Based on DPHHS test results it's likely this will turn out to be the first H1N1 (swine) influenza case in Montana.

"Considering the trend around the country, it's no surprise that a H1N1 (swine) influenza case has been identified in Montana," said DPHHS state medical officer Dr. Steven Helgerson. "The most important thing for people in Yellowstone County and Montana to know is that influenza illness is occurring. Most of the illness is being caused by seasonal influenza viruses, and now the recently recognized strain called H1N1 (swine) is also causing illness. It's very likely that more cases will be identified during the coming weeks. It's also important to understand that, at this time in the United States, H1N1 (swine) influenza is acting just like seasonal influenza. Most cases of both the seasonal and H1N1 swine have been self-limited and very few have required hospitalization."

Lil Anderson, President & CEO of RiverStone Health and Yellowstone County Health Officer further states: "We continue to ask all individuals with mild influenza-like illness to stay home. Children and adolescents with fever should not go to day care or school. Adults with fever should not go to work until their symptoms resolve."

The symptoms of H1N1 (swine) influenza in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and may include fever greater than 100 F, sore throat, cough, stuffy nose, chills, headache and body aches, and fatigue.

The department advises those who experience influenza symptoms to stay home for seven days after onset of symptoms, or at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.

The state health department also encourages people to take these personal precautions to decrease their chances of getting the influenza:

- 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.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Frequent hand washing or the use of hand sanitizers can protect people who are interacting in public places and prevent the spread of illness. H1N1 (swine) influenza is passed from person to person, Anderson said, and is not contracted by eating pork.

This is a rapidly evolving situation, and the state health department is asking people to be alert for changes in its guidance as it learns more, available on the department website dedicated to H1N1 (swine) influenza information at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/swineflu>.

The site also includes a link to CDC guidance on what to do if you experience influenza-like symptoms, Helgerson noted. The CDC's guidance on the use of antiviral medication during the current outbreak encourages use to treat severe influenza and people who are at high risk of serious influenza-related complications.

Most people who have influenza, including influenza caused by H1N1 swine, will recover without needing medication or medical attention.

For more information call DPHHS public information officer Jon Ebel at 406-444-0936 or Barbara Schneeman of Riverstone Health at 406-651-6420.