

H1N1 Influenza A (Swine Flu)

May 2, 2009

Situation Update

- The World Health Organization's influenza pandemic alert remains at level 5 (second-highest level).
- CDC is reporting 160 human infections with H1N1 (swine flu) in the United States (19 more than yesterday).
- Total of 63 confirmed cases in New York State.
- Human infections with this new virus have been confirmed in 21 states at this time.
- More cases, more hospitalizations and more deaths from this outbreak over the coming days and weeks. Influenza is always serious – each year, in the United States, seasonal influenza results in an estimated 36,000 deaths. This outbreak certainly poses the potential to be at least as serious as seasonal flu, if not more so.
- Because this is a new virus, most people will not have immunity to it and illness may be more severe and widespread as a result.
- CDC continues to update guidance continuously. Yesterday, CDC issued guidance on when to close schools and how to care for someone who is sick at home. For more information, visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/> or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.
- This is a rapidly evolving situation and guidance should be considered interim and will be updated frequently.
- This is a very unusual virus. This particular genetic combination of influenza virus segments has not been recognized before in the U.S. or elsewhere. This virus is a quadruple-reassortant virus, meaning that it contains genetic pieces from four different virus sources.
 - We have some gene segments that are North American swine influenza viruses (that we call North American lineage);
 - Some gene segments are North American avian influenza viruses (these are avian influenza viruses that circulate in birds in North America and we call North American lineage);
 - One gene segment is from a human influenza virus; and
 - Two gene segments that are normally found from swine influenza viruses in Asia and in Europe.
- CDC has isolated the new H1N1 virus and is working to make a candidate vaccine virus that can be provided to industry so that they manufacturers can scale up for production of a vaccine, if necessary.