



AROUND 40 countries around the world have reported cases of swine flu, but the illness has caused deaths in only four—Mexico, the United States, Canada and Costa Rica – and almost all infections outside Mexico have been relatively mild. There have been no cases in the UAE, apart from one transit passenger travelling from the USA to India. This information summarises the advice just published by Health Authority Abu Dhabi. For updates and more information, go to [www.haad.ae](http://www.haad.ae) or call toll-free 800 800.

### **What is swine flu?**

Swine flu is a respiratory disease caused by type A influenza viruses that is associated with regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen. Swine flu viruses have been reported to spread from person to person, but in the past this transmission was limited.

### **What are the symptoms?**

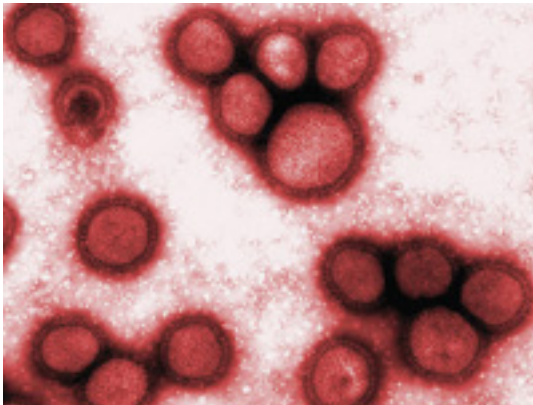
As with normal human flu the symptoms can include fever, coughs, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have also reported diarrhoea and vomiting. In the

past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu

Infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

### **How do people become infected?**

People usually get swine influenza from infected pigs. Human-to-human transmission has occurred in some instances, through coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people may 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 one day before symptoms develop and for seven or more days after becoming sick. Children, especially younger ones, might be contagious for longer periods. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.



### **What about the pandemic threat?**

It is likely that most of people don't have immunity to swine influenza. If a swine influenza virus established efficient human to- human transmission, it could cause an influenza pandemic.

Is there a human vaccine to protect from swine influenza?

There are no vaccines that contain the current swine influenza virus causing illness in human. It is not known whether current human seasonal influenza vaccines can provide any protection. Antiviral drugs like oseltamivir (Tami flu) or zanamivir (Relenza), prescription medicines that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body, can be used for treatment and/ or prevention.

### **What should you do to keep from getting the flu?**

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

Try not to touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus.

Try to stay in good general health-get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.

### **What should you do if you get sick?**

Avoid leaving your home while sick except to get local medical care, or as instructed by your doctor.

Do not go to work or school while you are ill. If you must leave your home (for example, to seek medical care) wear a surgical mask to keep from spreading your illness to others.

Always cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away used tissues in a trash can.

Wash your hands with soap and water often and especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel sanitizer.

Avoid close contact with other people as much as possible.

Travel advice

Avoid all nonessential travel to areas that have reported confirmed or suspected cases.

Check online at [www.who.int/csr/don/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/) for updates on the disease and countries affected. If you have returned from an area that has reported cases of swine flu, monitor your health closely for seven days.

If you become ill with fever and other symptoms of swine flu, seek medical advice immediately.

*[Caption] People around the world are taking preventive measures, Bad news bugs: the H1N1 virus*

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