



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

We've all heard about human swine influenza on the news and many of us even know someone who has been affected by the virus. As the virus spreads throughout the community it's important that we all do our bit to protect ourselves and others.

Hygiene seems a simple message but it's the most effective way of keeping you and your family healthy. To help keep you informed we have put together the following facts about human swine flu. We hope it helps to keep you and your family healthy this winter.

What is swine flu?

Human swine flu is a new strain of influenza that causes sickness similar to the normal 'flu'. Because it is new, none of us have any natural immunity to it.

Who is at risk?

While human swine flu causes mild illness in most people, it can be very serious in people who have pre-existing medical conditions like diabetes, obesity, chronic respiratory disease, heart, kidney and liver disease. This is because people with underlying health conditions may have weaker body defences making it harder for them to fight new illness. Indigenous people and pregnant women are also 'at risk' of becoming very sick if they catch human swine flu.

Should I be concerned?

Human swine flu can have serious consequences, which is why you need to consult your doctor, particularly if you are someone who has any underlying health conditions or you are pregnant.



What if my child gets sick?

Symptoms of human swine flu usually include fever, cough, sore throat and runny nose. If your child develops any of these symptoms you should keep them home from school until symptoms have gone. See your doctor if your child develops flu-like symptoms and they fall into an 'at risk' group.

Testing is no longer considered necessary for most people as the disease has spread widely.

Can my family be vaccinated against human swine flu?

Not at this stage, however, a vaccine is being developed and will hopefully be available later this year.

How do I keep informed?

For the latest information and to download posters and other resources visit

www.health.qld.gov.au/swineflu



HUMAN SWINE INFLUENZA



You can help to protect your family from influenza by following a few simple steps:

- keep household surfaces clean
- stay home when you are sick
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water. Get your kids to show you how they are washing their hands so you can check they're doing it thoroughly
- wash your hands before touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- don't share items such as glasses or cups, lipstick and toys
- try and stay about one metre away from people with flu-like symptoms

Eighty percent of common infectious diseases are spread by hand. Washing your hands regularly can significantly reduce your risk of catching flu.

Healthy me, healthy you

For a great read check out our new health and lifestyle magazine. The magazine includes feature articles on positive thinking, yoga and weight loss, as well as recipes, advice on nutrition, exercise, hygiene and the facts about influenza.

Visit www.health.qld.gov.au and click on the 'Get in touch with your healthy side' thumbprint.

Is your school displaying the Flu Fighter poster? If not, go to www.health.gov.au/swineflu to download.



As the peak of the flu season approaches and Human Swine Influenza continues to spread, the Queensland Government has rolled out a new campaign to remind people to 'get in touch with their healthy side' by practicing good hygiene.

The campaign includes a television commercial and convenience advertising, and provides a range of facts about our hygiene behaviour.

What's in your child's lunchbox?

Providing kids with healthy foods is more important than ever during flu season, so don't let packing the daily school lunch become a chore.

Make your mornings easier and lunch time healthier for your kids by tapping into your creative side. Cut fruit and vegetables into shapes and use different varieties each day. Baked beans make a great lunch or a tin of tuna with salad and bread on the side. Pack soup in a thermos for a yummy, warming lunch in winter. Yoghurt and fruit are quick, easy and healthy snacks for the lunch box. Involve your children in the decision about what they want for lunch.

Queensland Health's phone line **13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)** is for all Queenslanders to help take the worry out of health concerns. Qualified staff will give you advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Queensland Government