



Swine Flu Prevention

Swine flu is an illness caused by a type of influenza A virus that is a known cause of respiratory infections in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections have occurred infrequently. Swine flu viruses can spread from person-to-person, but in the past, have not spread readily among human populations.

Swine flu is a concern now because a new swine flu virus is spreading more widely between people than was seen in the past. While a swine flu pandemic is not happening at this time, the possibility of one occurring is a serious concern. County, state, and federal governments are taking steps to educate people about flu prevention and preparedness. Many of the precautions used to help prevent the spread of the flu are the same precautions used to prevent getting the seasonal flu. It starts with healthy habits.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends these healthy habits:

- ▶ **Avoid close contact with people who are sick** - and, when you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick.
- ▶ **Stay home when you are sick** - you will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- ▶ **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing** - put your used tissue in the waste basket. Or, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. Use soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- ▶ **Clean your hands for at least 20 seconds** - if you don't have access to water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs and others from your germs.
- ▶ **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth** - germs spread when people touch something that is contaminated with germs and then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Flu prevention supplies are available to all division employees to help you protect yourself from germs. Hand sanitizer dispensers are installed at work sites. Other supplies, including travel-sized bottles of instant hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes for use in shared work spaces, to clean counter tops and telephones, are also available. Use your regular supply ordering procedures to obtain flu prevention supplies.

For information about pandemic flu prevention and preparedness, call **Pam Badger** at 206-296-8441. For frequent updates and more information, contact Public Health's web site at, www.kingcounty.gov/health/swineflu or call their hotline at 206-296-4949.