

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL



SAFETY ALERT

PO Box 809, Trenton, NJ 08625-0809 (609) 633-6070

SAFETY ALERT 09-2.1

Swine Influenza Health Alert – Update 1 Issued May 4, 2009

As of the date of this update there have been seven confirmed cases of the H1N1 virus in New Jersey.

As more is learned about this virus and its spread, there is updated and changing information coming from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The following information for EMS providers has been supplied by the CDC and should be followed whenever patient care is performed:

Patient assessment interim recommendations:

If there **HAS NOT** been swine-origin influenza reported in the geographic area (See <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>), EMS providers should assess all patients as follows:

Step 1: EMS personnel should stay more than 6 feet away from patients and bystanders with symptoms and exercise appropriate routine respiratory droplet precautions while assessing all patients for suspected cases of swine-origin influenza.

Step 2: Assess all patients for symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness (fever plus one or more of the following: nasal congestion/ rhinorrhea, sore throat, or cough).

- If there is no acute febrile respiratory illness, proceed with normal EMS care.
- If symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness are present, then assess all patients for travel to a geographic area with confirmed cases of swine-origin influenza within the last 7 days or close contact with someone with travel to these areas.
 - If there was travel exposure, don appropriate PPE for suspected case of swine-origin influenza.
 - If there was no travel exposure, place a standard surgical mask on the patient (if tolerated) and use appropriate PPE for cases of acute febrile respiratory illness without suspicion of swine-origin influenza (as described in PPE section).

If the CDC **HAS CONFIRMED** swine-origin influenza in the geographic area (See <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>):

Step 1: Address scene safety:

- If dispatch information advises potential for acute febrile respiratory illness symptoms on scene, EMS personnel should don PPE for suspected cases of swine-origin influenza prior to entering scene.
- If dispatch information has not identified individuals with symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness on scene, EMS personnel should stay more than 6 feet away from patient and bystanders with symptoms and exercise appropriate routine respiratory droplet precautions while assessing all patients for suspected cases of swine-origin influenza.

Step 2: Assess all patients for symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness (fever plus one or more of the following: nasal congestion/ rhinorrhea, sore throat, or cough).

- If no symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness are present, provide routine EMS care.

- If symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness are present, don appropriate PPE for suspected case of swine-origin influenza if not already on.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) interim recommendations:

When treating a patient with a suspected case of swine-origin influenza as defined above, the following PPE should be worn:

- Fit-tested disposable N95 respirator and eye protection (e.g., goggles; eye shield), disposable non-sterile gloves, and gown, when coming into close contact with the patient.
- When treating a patient that is not a suspected case of swine-origin influenza but who has symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness, the following precautions should be taken:
 - Place a standard surgical mask on the patient, if tolerated. If not tolerated, EMS personnel may wear a standard surgical mask.
 - Use good respiratory hygiene – use non-sterile gloves for contact with patient, patient secretions, or surfaces that may have been contaminated. Follow hand hygiene including hand washing or cleansing with alcohol based hand disinfectant after contact.
 - Encourage good patient compartment vehicle airflow/ventilation to reduce the concentration of aerosol accumulation when possible.

Additional information about the swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>.

Updates will be issued on a continuing basis as necessary.

Reference: [Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) Systems and 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Points \(PSAPs\) for Management of Patients with Confirmed or Suspected Swine Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Infection](#)

PLEASE POST IMMEDIATELY