



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Date:** August 9, 2018  
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**Two San Luis Obispo County Influenza Cases Confirmed as Influenza A (H1N2v)  
*Both recovered after brief illness; risk to public is very low***

San Luis Obispo — The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department, in collaboration with the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has confirmed that two cases of influenza in San Luis Obispo County are variant influenza A (H1N2v) infections. The patients had brief illnesses and have recovered.

Influenza A (H1N2) is a type of influenza that spreads among pigs. Influenza viruses that spread among pigs are occasionally transmitted to people who have close contact with pigs. When this happens, the infections in humans are called variant influenza virus infections. Variant influenza virus infections are usually mild, with symptoms similar to those of seasonal influenza. However, like seasonal influenza, serious illness is possible.

The patients in this case all had extended contact with pigs at the California Mid-State Fair, where a pig infected with influenza A (H1N2) was present. Mid-State Fair officials have fully cooperated with the Public Health Department and supported this investigation.

In recent years, variant influenza virus infections have occurred each summer in the United States, and most infections have been linked to exposure to pigs at agricultural events.

When the virus is transmitted from a pig to a person, it generally does not spread widely to other people.

It cannot be transmitted by eating pork.

The fair ended on July 29, and no new cases from contact with pigs at the fair are expected. Additional influenza tests conducted by the Public Health Department as part of this investigation have been negative. While additional cases associated with the situation might be identified, the risk to the general public is very low.

As a precaution, people who had extended contact with pigs at the Mid-State Fair should be alert for symptoms of the flu: fever, cough, sore throat, muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue. Some people may experience vomiting and diarrhea with the flu. Symptoms usually start about one to four days after being exposed and last two to seven days.

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If you experience flu symptoms—now or during flu season—it is generally most effective and most comfortable to recover on your own at home.

Some people are especially at risk for serious complications from the flu, including very young children (under age 5), older adults (over age 65), and people with certain underlying medical conditions. These people should be especially alert and, if they experience symptoms of the flu, seek treatment from their regular doctor's office.

Flu of any sort can be dangerous and even healthy people can sometimes experience serious complications. If you experience difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chest pain, severe abdominal pain, confusion, sudden dizziness, or severe vomiting that won't stop, seek medical attention immediately.

If you do not experience these symptoms and are not in these high-risk groups but are concerned about flu-like symptoms, call your regular healthcare provider. If you do not have a regular healthcare provider, call or visit your local urgent care center.

If you seek medical attention for the flu and have had extended contact with pigs, tell your health care provider about that contact.

In addition to the California Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Food and Agriculture have been informed of this investigation.

The Public Health Department continues to investigate this situation.

Keep reading for FAQs on this type of influenza and how to protect yourself.

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### **How do people catch the flu from pigs?**

Influenza can be transmitted from pigs in much the same way it is transmitted from people, such as through breathing in the virus after a pig has coughed or sneezed, or touching a surface it has contaminated. For example: a pig may cough or sneeze and a person may breathe infected droplets in the air, or a person may touch their face after touching a surface where a pig has sneezed. This generally occurs when a person has extended close contact with an infected pig.

It is not possible to catch influenza from eating pork.

Unlike the seasonal flu, this type of virus generally does not spread easily or widely from person to person.

### **Is flu transmitted from pigs more dangerous than the regular flu?**

No, flu that is transmitted from a pig to a person does not appear to be more dangerous than the strains that regularly circulate during flu season.

It is important to remember that flu of any sort can be dangerous and even healthy people can sometimes become very ill. Anyone who catches the flu at any time of year should be alert and seek medical attention if they experience serious complications.

### **What can I do to protect myself?**

The best way to protect yourself from the flu—now or during flu season—is to take common-sense precautions:

- **Wash your hands often, and especially before eating or drinking.** Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.** This helps prevent the virus from entering your body.
- **Avoid contact with people and animals who are sick.** This might mean you need to delay a meeting or a visit, or meet by phone or video instead.

**In petting zoos or fair settings**, it is especially important to frequently wash your hands and avoid eating or drinking in areas around pigs and other animals. Don't take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, strollers or similar items into animal areas. Always avoid close face-to-face contact with animals, especially those who appear to be sick.

These are good habits to maintain throughout the year to protect yourself not only from flu but also from colds and other illnesses.

During flu season, it is also important to get the flu shot.

### **What should I do if I have the flu?**

- **Stay home.** If you get sick with flu symptoms, in most cases, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible. Rest, stay hydrated, and take temperature-reducing medicines (such as Tylenol or ibuprofen) as needed.
- **Keep it to yourself.** Don't share the flu. Wash your hands often and use a tissue to cover your cough or sneeze. Avoid spending time with other people, especially those who are at risk for serious complications of the flu.
- **Look out for signs that it may be more serious.** In most cases, you do not need medical care or prescription medicine to recover from the flu. However, some cases can be more serious. See the symptoms described above for signs that you may need to see a healthcare provider.

### **If I get sick, should I take Tamiflu or other antiviral medicine?**

If you are sick with the flu, your doctor may prescribe an antiviral medicine such as Tamiflu to help reduce symptoms. This is the same for seasonal flu or variant flu. If your doctor prescribes antiviral medicine, be sure to take it as directed. If you are generally healthy (except for the flu), your doctor may not prescribe this medicine. Most of the time, people who are generally healthy do not need to take antiviral medicine for the flu.

### **Where can I learn more?**

Visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

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