



## JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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### **Swine Flu: What You Need to Know**

**Jefferson County, Missouri** – The Jefferson County Health Department is keeping a close watch on the developing swine flu situation in the United States and internationally. As of this morning, forty human cases of swine flu have been identified in five states in the United States. None of these cases have experienced severe illness. At this time, there are no reports of illness in Missouri linked to swine flu.

Swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by one of the influenza A viruses. Normally, the virus does not infect people, but like all viruses it can mutate. Sometimes, it changes into a form that can easily infect humans. The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to those of regular seasonal flu and include fever, fatigue, body aches, sore throat, lack of appetite, and coughing. Swine flu may also cause runny nose, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. The current cases of swine flu in the U.S. have been mild so far, and are no different from what we see during the regular flu season.

Health departments across the country, including the Jefferson County Health Department, have planned for an influenza pandemic, and are well prepared to respond to this situation. Response plans have been put into action to help minimize the spread of swine flu. There are also steps everyone can take to stay healthy and lessen their risk of contracting the flu.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you do get sick, stay home from work or school, and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Updated information regarding the swine flu investigation is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu). For more information about the Jefferson County Health Department, call (636) 797-3737 or visit [www.jeffcohealth.org](http://www.jeffcohealth.org).

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