

**EPI Update for Tuesday, April 28, 2009**  
**Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE)**  
**Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)**

**Items for this week's EPI Update include:**

- **Swine influenza update**
- **Updated guidelines for testing for suspected swine influenza cases**
- **Procedure for testing for swine influenza**
- **Reporting suspected or confirmed swine influenza cases**
- **Call center telephone lines**

**Swine influenza update**

As of today, suspected, probable and confirmed cases of swine flu are immediately reportable to public health by calling 800-362-2736.

No probable or confirmed cases or clusters of swine flu have occurred in Iowa. As of early Tuesday morning, 40 cases of A (H1N1) swine influenza have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) from five states; California (CA) reported seven cases, Texas (TX) two cases, Kansas (KS) two cases, New York (NY) 28 cases and Ohio (OH) one case. The cases do not report swine exposure. There has been one reported hospitalization and no deaths.

This strain of A (H1N1) swine influenza is a novel influenza strain that is spreading person to person. The seasonal flu vaccine is not believed to protect against this novel strain of swine influenza. Rapid screening tests may not detect swine influenza and therefore are not recommended. Because of risk of spread to laboratorians, viral culture is not recommended. See below for recommended testing. For additional information go to [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/).

**Guidelines for testing for suspected swine influenza cases**

Actions requested of Health Care Providers in Iowa:

Criteria for testing patients for swine influenza are:

A person with an acute respiratory illness\*:

1. with onset within 7 days of close contact with a person who is a confirmed case of swine influenza (H1N1) **OR**
2. with onset within seven days of travel to a community either within the United States or internationally where there are one or more confirmed swine influenza A (H1N1) cases\*\* **OR**
3. who resides in a community where there are one or more confirmed swine influenza A (H1N1) cases.

\*Definition of Acute Respiratory Illness: Fever >37.8°C (100°F) plus cough or sore throat, with or without rhinorrhea or nasal congestion

\*\* See above for today's areas of risk. See [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/) for updated information

### **Procedure for testing for swine influenza**

Tests: Posterior nasopharyngeal swab is recommended. Nasopharyngeal aspirate or wash will also be accepted. UHL will conduct test free of charge. Local public health offices should have testing materials.

Collection: Use Dacron or rayon swabs with a flexible metal shaft swab or NP-flocked swab with flexible plastic shaft. Do not use calcium alginate or wooden-shafted swabs. Use M4 transport tube provided in kit or equivalent viral transport media. Place swabs in M4 transport medium, and do not remove. Do not send dry swabs. Refrigerate specimens at 2-8°C immediately after collection. DO NOT FREEZE.

Test request form instructions: On the viral test request form, CLEARLY DOCUMENT all travel history and clinical information, including signs and symptoms. If the patient has traveled to an affected area, please write where and when the travel occurred. This is critical for the assessment of the appropriateness of testing. The viral test request form can be found at: [www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/vdvbpcrrequestform.pdf](http://www.uhl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/vdvbpcrrequestform.pdf).

Shipping: Wrap the specimen in absorbent material, and place into a biohazard bag. Ship the specimen at cold 4 degrees C with ice packs. Use routine courier service to transport specimens to UHL or contact your health care network laboratory coordinator for more information.

For additional information on specimen collection and shipment visit: [www.uhl.uiowa.edu/aboutuhl/news/archive/swineflu/index.xml](http://www.uhl.uiowa.edu/aboutuhl/news/archive/swineflu/index.xml).

This situation is evolving rapidly. Visit the IDPH Web site at: [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/swine\\_flu.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/swine_flu.asp) frequently for updated information.

### **Call center telephone lines**

The hot line number for general public inquiries is 800-447-1985.

The hot line specifically for health care providers is 866-822-5815.

### **Have a healthy week!**

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology  
Iowa Department of Public Health  
800-362-2736