

April 27, 2009

Message to the USC Community

From: Todd R. Dickey and Michael L. Jackson

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued a public alert in the wake of 40 confirmed cases of swine influenza virus infection identified in California, Texas, New York, Kansas and Ohio.

To date, there have been no confirmed cases of this influenza at USC or in Los Angeles County.

According to the CDC alert, “this strain of influenza virus is unique because it is a combination of genes from swine, bird, and human influenza viruses. Infected individuals report flu-like symptoms of fever, aches and pains, sore throats, coughing and trouble breathing.

“Some people have also reported diarrhea and vomiting. These cases may be linked to an outbreak of influenza-like-illness in Mexico.

“At this time only two of the 20 cases in the US have been hospitalized and all have recovered. However, CDC and state public and animal health authorities are still in the early stages of the investigations.”

All members of the USC community are asked to take the following precautions to help avoid contact and transmission of this virus:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. This removes germs from your skin and helps prevent diseases from spreading. Use sanitizing gels when hand washing is not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, as these are pathways for spread of germs.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in a wastebasket. Afterwards, wash your hands.
- Seek medical care if you feel sick.
- If you are ill with fever and other symptoms of flu like cough and sore throat, see a doctor, especially if you think you may have had contact with someone with swine flu or severe respiratory illness in the past 7 days before becoming ill.

USC is in contact with health authorities and agencies monitoring the situation; updates will be sent to the USC community as warranted.

More information and resources can be found at:

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_001

California Department of Public Health: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

CDC Travelers' Health Web Site: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>

World Health Organization: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>