

April 28, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DSS EMPLOYEES

FROM: Jennifer Tidball, DFAS Director

SUBJECT: Swine Influenza Information

In response to concerns surrounding a new strain of swine flu that has prompted a nationwide health emergency, Governor Nixon issued a [press release](#) announcing that Missouri health officials are taking steps to do everything possible to prevent the spread of swine flu in our state. The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is the lead agency in coordinating the state's preparation for possible influenza cases. At this time, there have been no reported cases of swine flu in Missouri. Below is general information about swine flu. We will continue to provide you with updates regarding events in Missouri as they unfold. You may also refer to the [DHSS](#) and [CDC](#) websites for additional information.

What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?

The symptoms are similar to those of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people. Like seasonal flu, swine flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

How does swine flu spread?

Spread of this swine influenza virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

How can someone with the flu infect someone else?

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

There are everyday actions you can take to stay healthy.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in

the trash after you use it.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.