



COUNTY OF MARATHON

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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To: Parents and School/Day Care Staff

From: Julie Willems Van Dijk RN PhD
Marathon County Health Officer

Re: Swine Influenza Information

Many of us are hearing information regarding the infection with swine flu that is occurring in the United States, Mexico, and other parts of the world. State and local officials, led by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), have been monitoring the situation and continue to observe this situation very closely.

To date, there are five probable (but not yet confirmed) cases in Wisconsin; one each in Adams, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan Counties and two in Milwaukee. State health officials believe it is quite possible that more may be reported in the next few days.

Swine Influenza A virus is a new virus that has not been identified previously in people, and person-to-person transmission appears to be occurring. Swine flu is thought to be spread via person to person contact through contaminated air droplets from coughing and sneezing from an infected person. The virus is not spread by food including pork or pork products. Eating properly cooked and handled pork products is safe.

The symptoms of human swine flu are similar to the regular seasonal influenza and include fever (greater than 100 degrees F), lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu have reported additional symptoms such as runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. In some situations, the virus can develop into pneumonia. It is believed that the seasonal influenza vaccine does not provide protection against swine flu.

The most important ways to protect your family and your child are to stay home from school or work if you show any signs of swine flu and contact your health care provider for guidance about the need for testing. We also encourage everyone to practice good hygiene, including:

- cover all coughs and sneezes;
- wash hands frequently and especially after coughing, sneezing, and blowing one's nose, and before eating;
- avoid touching of nose, mouth, and eyes; and
- properly dispose all contaminated tissues.

State and local health department are working with school districts to increase good hygiene practices, monitor for ill students, and, if necessary, close schools or day cares if there are local outbreaks of disease. If you have questions, please call us at 261-1900 or 1-866-640-4106.

More information is also available on our website at www.co.marathon.wi.us or at www.cdc.gov/swineflu/