

# State of Montana DPHHS HAN ADVISORY

Distributed via the DPHHS Health Alert Network (HAN) System

Sunday, April 26, 2009 6:20 PM

DPHHS Health Alert Hotline 1-800-701-5769 (Health Alert Network Website at [www.han.mt.gov](http://www.han.mt.gov))

DPHHS Contact Information: Montana Communicable Disease Program 444-0273

DPHHS recommends you do forward this HAN message on to your local HAN contacts.

DPHHS Recommendations: Please see summary below and CDC HAN attachments.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continues to update state public health officials regarding the swine influenza situation on a regular basis. MTDPHHS will forward CDC Health Alert Network (HAN) messages as they are received. Each message will contain MTDPHHS recommendations that are specific to Montana for public health and healthcare professionals.

*At this time, there are no known probable or confirmed cases of swine influenza in Montana.* However, it is important that healthcare professionals consider the possibility of swine influenza in patients presenting with influenza-like illness and submit respiratory specimens to the Montana Public Health Laboratory for testing.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

In order to identify potential cases in Montana, please do the following:

1. SUSTAIN current influenza-like illness surveillance activity and *increase frequency* of contact with key active surveillance partners (providers, schools, nursing homes, etc) to *daily*.
2. ENCOURAGE CLINICIANS who identify cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) to submit respiratory specimens to the Montana Public Health Laboratory.
3. NOTIFY the Communicable Disease Epidemiology program at 444-0273 about suspected or probable individual cases and/or clusters of influenza-like illness in your community.
4. EDUCATE THE PUBLIC about control measures for seasonal influenza:
  - Persons with febrile respiratory illness should stay home to avoid spreading illness to others in their community.
  - Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.
  - Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to get rid of most germs and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting adequate rest and exercise.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLINICIANS

1. Maintain vigilance for cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) defined as follows:  
Fever  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$  /  $37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  (oral or equivalent)  
AND  
Cough and/or sore throat  
in the absence of a KNOWN cause other than influenza.
2. For patients with ILI as defined above:
  - a. Obtain respiratory swab for viral testing using a Dacron tipped swab with an aluminum or plastic shaft. Place in viral transport medium, label with patient information and refrigerate until the specimen can be sent for testing at the Montana Public Health Laboratory (MPHL). Send specimens under cold conditions. DO NOT send to a referral laboratory. *Testing will be*

*provided at no cost to the patient or provider.* Information on shipping to MPHL can be obtained by calling 1-800-821-7284.

- b. NOTIFY local public health officials regarding cases of ILI. The local health department can assist with case investigation and follow-up, if needed.

## RESOURCES

General information about swine flu

[http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general\\_info.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general_info.htm)

Swine Flu Infection Control and Patient Care

[http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines\\_infection\\_control.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines_infection_control.htm)

Preventing the Flu

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>

## CDC HAN MESSAGES ARE ATTACHED:

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The goal of Montana's Health Alert Network is to transmit information to local public health authorities as quickly as possible, and assign a suitable priority to the message that is sensitive to the impact of a health-related event providing information relative to the public health and safety of Montanans. For questions or comments relative to Montana's HAN system you may contact the DPHHS HAN Coordinator, Gerry Wheat at <<mailto:gwheat@mt.gov>>

### Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

You have received this message based upon the information contained within our emergency notification data base. If you have a different or additional e-mail or fax address that you would like us to use please notify us as soon as possible by e-mail at [hhshan@mt.gov](mailto:hhshan@mt.gov) <mailto:hhshan@mt.gov>

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