

State of Montana DPHHS HAN UPDATE

Distributed via the DPHHS Health Alert Network (HAN) System

Thursday, April 30, 2009 5:16 PM

*******Local HAN Coordinators make sure to add hhshan@mt.gov to your Local HAN Contact Lists so DPHHS receives a copy of your local HAN messages. *******

DPHHS Contact Information: EPI Program 444-0273

DPHHS recommends you forward at your discretion. Please do not forward the conference call information.

DPHHS has scheduled a conference call for **Public Health Departments at 3:30 PM, Friday, May 1st**. We will provide a general update on plans being made in the various DPHHS programs to address swine influenza and answer questions.

To join the conference call dial: XXXXXXXXXXXX and enter XXXXXXXXXXXX for the pass code.

NEWS FROM THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

For immediate release

April 30, 2009

Contact: Dr. Steve Helgerson, State Medical Officer, DPHHS, 406-444-1286

Jon Ebelt, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, 406-444-0936

DPHHS Continues to Monitor Laboratory Test Results *Montana Still has No Confirmed Cases of Swine Influenza*

Test results to date from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Public Health Laboratory are showing no sign of swine influenza in Montana.

According to Laboratory Services Bureau Chief Anne Weber, laboratory staff has processed over 100 specimens from people diagnosed with influenza-like illness since Tuesday, April 28, 2009. "The tests results are showing considerable seasonal influenza, but not swine influenza," Weber said. Additional specimens from all around the state are still being tested daily.

DPHHS state medical officer Dr. Steve Helgerson said the surveillance efforts by state physicians is working as indicated by the numerous specimens sent to the laboratory from people with influenza-like illness. "Based on the number of test results the state laboratory has been processing, there is every reason to think that we'll identify a case of swine influenza when it occurs," Dr. Helgerson said.

People who have travel history to areas affected by swine influenza and who are suffering from influenza symptoms should contact their healthcare provider.

In the event a swine influenza case is confirmed in Montana, that information will be posted on the DPHHS website. A website page has been created to inform the public about the latest swine influenza information. The site can be accessed at <http://dphhs.mt.gov/swineflu/>.

Helgerson stresses the same precautions recommended to limit the spread of seasonal influenza also apply to the spread of the swine influenza. "As we observe swine influenza continue to spread around the country, following the basic preventive steps will help tremendously," he said.

Take these steps everyday to protect your health:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, especially after contact with anyone who may be ill;
- Cover your the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing;
- Stay home from work, school, daycare and large gatherings when you're sick;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- People experiencing cough, fever and fatigue, possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting, should contact their physician.

The symptoms of swine influenza are the same as the symptoms of seasonal influenza in humans and include: Fever greater than 100 degrees F, sore throat, cough, stuffy nose, chills, headache and body aches, and fatigue. Severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine influenza infection outside the U.S. Like seasonal influenza, swine influenza may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

For more information about the swine influenza investigation go to the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>.

So far, CDC is reporting 109 human infections of swine influenza and one death. A list of states with the numbers of people confirmed is updated daily at www.cdc.gov/swineflu.

For more information call DPHHS public information officer Jon Ebelt and 406-444-0936.

DPHHS Health Alert Hotline 1-800-701-5769

Visit the DPHHS Health Alert Network Website at www.han.mt.gov

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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>

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