

Swine flu – advice for the public

There are a number of things you can do to reduce the risk of getting flu and help stop the spread of the virus.

Prevent the spread of infection

When you cough or sneeze, your germs go everywhere. Fast. And once they've hit a surface, they can survive for hours. Covering your mouth and nose with your hand won't stop them. But a tissue will. Catch the sneeze, then bin the tissue and wash your hands with soap and water as soon as possible to kill the germs. Remember to clean hard surfaces like door handles regularly, with a normal cleaning product.

There's a simple way to remember this: Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.

If you feel well

The advice from the Department of Health and the Health Protection Agency is to go about your normal day-to-day activities, including going to school or work if you have no symptoms. This applies even if you have travelled from an affected area.

If you feel unwell

If you think you may have had contact with someone with swine flu, or have been to an affected area and you've developed symptoms which include fever, plus one or more of the following:

- Headache;
- Limb or joint pain;
- Sore throat;
- Cough;
- Runny nose.

You must stay at home and seek advice by telephone from your GP or contact NHS Direct. They will give you advice on your symptoms and the next steps you should take. Do not go to Accident and Emergency (A&E).

Need further advice and information?

Further advice and information is available from NHS Direct or the Swine Flu Information Line:

- NHS Direct - 0845 4647
- Swine Flu Information Line – 0800 1 513 513

Further guidance can be found on the NHS web site www.nhs.uk and Health Protection Agency's web site www.hpa.org.uk