



AUSTRALIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION INC.

Swine Flu- Swine influenza A

Dental patient briefing on seasonal influenza and swine Influenza A

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Swine influenza A, also known colloquially as "Swine flu", is caused by the H1N1 virus. This is a new (novel) virus which has not previously been identified in North America or elsewhere. Media coverage has highlighted recent human cases in Mexico, Canada and the United States. International travellers returning to these areas will likely be a major vector for spread of the virus to the global community. As yet there are no confirmed cases of swine flu in Australia.

There is no difference in transmission modes between regular seasonal influenza and swine flu, as both are transmitted by droplet nuclei released into the air when a person infected with the flu coughs or sneezes. People can also become infected by touching their nose or mouth after touching something contaminated with the flu virus. Patients can infect others 24 hours before they begin experiencing symptoms, and up to 7 days after they become sick.

Regular flu and swine flu are both characterized by rapid onset (3-6 hours) of a collection of symptoms, including:

- Fever (
- Body chills that are not related to a cold environment.
- A sudden headache
- Extreme tiredness.
- A non-productive or dry cough (with no mucus)
- Muscle aches that are sudden and unexplained.
- Stomach symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea (particularly in children)
- Moderate to severe chest discomfort

Note that the symptoms of both seasonal influenza and swine flu differ from those of the common cold, as summarized in the Table below.

A typical case of the flu can last up to one week, however seasonal influenza itself can cause many different illness patterns, ranging from mild common cold symptoms to typical "flu" to life-threatening pneumonia and other complications, including secondary bacterial infections. Influenza can be a serious illness for elderly patients and those with chronic illnesses such as diabetes and asthma.

The swine flu virus is resistant to the antiviral medications amantadine and rimantadine, but it is sensitive to oseltamivir and zanamivir. Based on recent experience in the United States, early treatment of infected patients with Tamiflu (oseltamivir) or Relenza (zanamivir) mitigates symptoms and prevents serious complications of swine flu.

At this stage there is no suggestion that stockpiles of these important antiviral drugs should be used for prophylaxis; rather they are being retained for treatment of known cases of swine flu.

Symptom	Cold	Flu
Fever	Fever is rare with a cold.	Fever is usually present with the flu in up to 80% of all flu cases. A temperature of 100°F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the flu.
Coughing	A hacking, productive (mucus-producing) cough is often present with a cold.	A non-productive (non-mucus producing) cough is usually present with the flu (sometimes referred to as dry cough).
Aches	Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.	Severe aches and pains are common with the flu.
Stuffy Nose	Stuffy nose is commonly present with a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.	Stuffy nose is not commonly present with the flu.
Chills	Chills are uncommon with a cold.	60% of people who have the flu experience chills.
Tiredness	Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.	Tiredness is moderate to severe with the flu.
Sneezing	Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.	Sneezing is not common with the flu.
Sudden Symptoms	Cold symptoms tend to develop over a few days.	The flu has a rapid onset within 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.
Headache	A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.	A headache is very common with the flu, present in 80% of flu cases.
Sore Throat	Sore throat is commonly present with a cold.	Sore throat is not commonly present with the flu.
Chest Discomfort	Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.	Chest discomfort is often severe with the flu.

(Source: www.tamiflu.com)

The common side effects of these two antiviral drugs are as follows. For Oseltamivir (Tamiflu), nausea and vomiting; and for Zanamivir (Relenza), a reduction in lung function, meaning that the drug is not used in patients with underlying lung or heart disease or asthma.

The main issues relating to swine flu for dental patients are as follows:

You should obtain the yearly seasonal influenza vaccination. However, strains of influenza may vary from year to year and from area to area, so vaccination may not provide complete protection.

Tell your dental clinic if you have recently travelled in an area affected by swine flu or have come into contact with known or suspected carriers.¹

If you have symptoms of flu,

1. Stay at home and cancel any dental appointments. Do not make new dental appointments until you are well, which would normally be at least 7 days after the onset of illness. Persons who continue to be ill longer than 7 days after illness onset are potentially contagious until symptoms have resolved. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for even longer periods.
2. Do not leave home except to seek medical care.
3. Within the home, stay in the one room as much as possible (with the door closed), and avoid coming into close contact with healthy persons (i.e. maintain a separation of 2 metres). Wear a mask when outside of that room.
4. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue whenever coughing or sneezing, then immediately discard the tissue into the waste, and wash your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth after coughing or sneezing.
5. Wash your hands frequently, using a detergent-based product or alcohol-based hand preparation.
6. Wash cups and other utensils thoroughly with detergent and water after use.
7. Contact your dentist or dental clinic for a new appointment only once you have recovered fully.

Useful resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidelines_infection_control.htm

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/side-effects.htm>

<http://www.tamiflu.com/>



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

Swine Influenza Update Bulletin
11am 29 April 2009

Current Australian Cases Under Investigation: 10:05 29/04/09

Jurisdictions	Suspect Cases	Probable	Confirmed
ACT	6	0	0
NSW	10	0	0
Vic	19	0	0
Tas	2	0	0
Qld	31	0	0
SA	14	0	0
NT	1	0	0
WA	8	0	0
Total	91	0	0

Source: NetEpi/CDNA

Current International Cases Under Investigation: 10:05 29/04/09

Countries	Suspect Cases*	Probable*	Confirmed+	Probable Deaths+	Confirmed Deaths+
Mexico	1614	697	33	132	20
USA	0	0	64	0	0
Canada	13	0	13	0	0
Americas other	65	0	1	0	0
UK	17	0	2	0	0
Spain	36	0	1	0	0
Israel	0	0	2	0	0
Europe other	35	0	0	0	0
NZ	43	7	3	0	0
China	0	0	0	0	0
Asia other	1	0	0	0	0
Middle East	0	0	0	0	0
Australia	91	0	0	0	0
Total	1915	704	119	132	20

*Source: Promed, Media Monitors, ABC, BBC, GPHIN, National Newspapers
+Source: Official Health websites: WHO, CDC, phac, eCDC, HPAUK, MOHNS, Mexico, CHP
China

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