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Public Health Update

Information On Swine Influenza

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There are currently 8 cases of swine flu reported in California: 6 in San Diego County and 2 in Imperial County. No cases have been reported in Riverside County at this time.

Swine flu is a cause of respiratory diseases in pigs throughout the world and can occasionally cause human disease. In the past, CDC received reports of approximately one human swine influenza virus infection every one to two years in the United States, but since 2005, 12 cases of human infection with swine influenza have been reported. The increase could be a result of increased influenza testing capabilities and capacities in public health laboratories.

Most commonly, human cases of swine influenza happen when people are in close proximity to infected pigs, such as in pig production barns and livestock exhibits at fairs. The symptoms of swine influenza in people are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal influenza and include fever, lethargy, coughing and lack of appetite. To diagnose swine influenza A infection, a respiratory specimen is collected within the first 4 to 5 days of infection. The seasonal influenza vaccine (i.e., flu shot), most likely does not protect against swine H1N1 viruses. Although the current influenza season has been mild in Riverside County, individuals are encouraged to take the following steps to stop the spread of influenza and other respiratory illnesses:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to friends and co-workers or students.
- 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.
- For further information about swine influenza, visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/index.htm> or 1-800-CDC-INFO.

If you are a member of the media seeking further information, please contact Disease Control at (951) 358-5107.