



“Helping to maintain a healthy community”

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Health Commissioner

Health Alert

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OHIOANS TESTS POSITIVE FOR SWINE FLU

Chardon, OH – April 27, 2009 – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) confirmed a case of swine flu involving a 9-year-old boy from Lorain County. The patient is considered to have a mild case of the disease and is recovering at home.

Because this combination of strains of the influenza virus is new, ODH and local health departments remind Ohioans of the precautions they should take to avoid exposure. As with all newly emerging flu strains, no vaccine has yet been developed.

“I urge Ohioans to be alert to information about this new flu,” said ODH Director Alvin D. Jackson, M.D. “In addition, the tried-and-true saying about washing hands and covering one’s cough remains sound medical advice.”

Symptoms of this swine flu virus closely resemble seasonal flu, and include fever, weakness, coughing and lack of appetite.

ODH and local health departments are working with health care providers and hospitals around the state to determine if there are other cases. According to recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), all health care providers who see patients with flu-like symptoms and learn that the patient traveled to Mexico, affected counties in Southern California or Texas during the 7 days preceding their illness onset, should have nasal swab samples from the patient tested. All specimens need to go to the ODH lab for characterization. **Please call the Gauga County Health District for this information.** Recommendations from ODH and CDC include:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

Additional information is available on the Gauga County Health District, ODH and CDC Web sites at <http://www.geaugacountyhealth.org>, <http://www.odh.ohio.gov> and <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>. The Gauga County Health District will be providing additional updates as information becomes available.

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