

CDC Recommendations to Reduce the Risk of H3N2v Flu Virus Infection for Fairgoers and Swine Exhibitors

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Hello, I'm Dr. Lyn Finelli with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Today, I want to talk to you about CDC's recommendations for reducing your risk of becoming infected with the H3N2v virus if you are attending a fair where pigs will be present or are someone who plans to exhibit or help exhibit swine at a fair. Most human influenza H3N2v virus infections reported to date have occurred in people with direct and prolonged exposure to pigs at agricultural fairs, specifically in people exhibiting or helping to exhibit pigs.

Infection from pigs to people is thought to happen mainly when an infected pig coughs or sneezes droplets with influenza virus in them spread through the air. Infection also may occur by a person touching an infected pig or a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own eyes, mouth, or nose. A third way to possibly get infected is to inhale the dust containing the influenza virus.

Most illnesses with this virus have been mild, with symptoms like seasonal flu; however, serious illness with hospitalization and death resulting have occurred. Some people are at high risk from this virus. People who are at high risk of serious flu complications include children younger than five, people 65 years and older, pregnant women, and people at any age with certain chronic health conditions, like asthma, other lung diseases, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems, neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions.

CDC is recommending that people who are at high risk should avoid exposure to pigs and pig arenas at fairs this season. That means if you were planning to exhibit a pig or pigs, and you have a high risk condition, you may not be able to exhibit your swine this season.

For people with high risk conditions planning only to attend fairs where pigs will be present, stay away from pigs and pig arenas.

For people who are not at high risk for flu complications, here are some general recommendations to follow when attending fairs:

- Don't take food or drinks into pig areas and especially don't eat or drink or put anything into your mouth in pig areas.
- Don't take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, baby strollers, or similar items into pig areas.
- Avoid close contact with pigs that look or act ill.
- Take protective measures if you must come in contact with pigs that are known to be or suspected to be sick. This includes minimizing contacts with pigs and wearing personal protective equipment like protective clothing and gloves and masks that cover your mouth and nose when contact is required.

- Wash your hands often with soap and running water before and after exposure to pigs. If soap and running water are not available, use alcohol-based hand rub.
- To further reduce the risk of infection, minimize contact with pigs and swine barns.
- Watch your pig, if you have one, for illness, and call a veterinarian if you suspect illness.
- Avoid contacts with pigs if *you* have flu-like illness symptoms. Wait 7 days after your illness has started or until you've been without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer. If you must have contact with pigs while you are sick, take protective actions that we mentioned above.

People with high risk factors who develop flu symptoms should call a health care provider as soon as possible, and tell your health care provider about your risk factor and that you've had exposure to pigs, including attendance at a fair where pigs were present. The seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against H3N2v, but prescription influenza antiviral drugs can treat H3N2v illness in people. If you're sick with H3N2v, early treatment with antiviral drugs is beneficial.

The signs and symptoms of H3N2v virus infection are similar to those caused by illness from human seasonal influenza, and can include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose. Vomiting and diarrhea can also occur. So far, most illness from H3N2v has been mild, but hospitalizations and deaths have occurred. CDC has developed these recommendations to protect people at greatest risk for infection and serious illness with H3N2v virus.

CDC continues to monitor this situation closely and will provide updated information and recommendations as we learn more.

For additional information on H3N2v, visit www.cdc.gov/flu and click on the "H3N2v" link found at the "Other Flu Web sites" section. Thank you.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.