



Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Overview of swine flu outbreak situation

On April 26, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) declared a public health emergency as swine flu levels in the United States increased. At present, five states have reported cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection – California, Kansas, New York, Ohio and Texas. The emergency declaration is not intended to imply the severity of the situation but is rather used to initiate the deployment of federal stockpiles of medications to regional sites.

Internationally, cases have been reported in Mexico, Canada, Spain, United Kingdom, Israel and New Zealand. Late Monday (April 27), the World Health Organization increased the global influenza preparedness plan for the influenza to Phase 4, indicating a sustained human-to-human transmission (more details can found at: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/phase/en/index.html).

Medco is monitoring this dynamic situation and will provide updates as they become available.

► At a glance

- Swine flu is a type of influenza that usually infects pigs. Human transmissions from pigs have infrequently occurred over the years but human-to-human transmission has been rare.
- This outbreak involves the swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection. [NOTE: this is different from human influenza A (H1N1).]
- Symptoms of the influenza are severe: high fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, extreme fatigue, diarrhea and vomiting.
- Protective measures:
 - contact avoidance
 - hand washing and hand sanitizers
- Two antiviral drugs (Tamiflu® and Relenza®) are recommended by the CDC to treat and prevent swine flu virus infection.
- The U.S. government stockpiles the medicine in case of a pandemic outbreak.
- Retail pharmacies and public health departments are the quickest source for immediate antiviral needs.

CDC provides a thorough overview of the swine flu outbreak at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact your Medco Account Management Team.