

No swine flu reported in Central Oregon â€“ yet

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

BEND, Ore. -- Public health officials in Oregon are stepping up surveillance for a new strain of influenza known as swine flu, after 40 cases have been confirmed in multiple states along with the numerous cases in other countries including Mexico and Canada. No known cases have been confirmed in Central Oregon or the State.

In the tri-county region, the flu season is expiring. Still, in light of the appearance of the new strain, public health directors from Deschutes (Scott Johnson), Crook (Muriel Delavergne-Brown), and Jefferson Counties (Jeff Davis) are working together on preparation and have been planning for this type of event over the past few years. The three county officials are carefully monitoring the situation and have increased surveillance efforts for human cases of swine flu in the region, and will continue to provide information to the public.

Three important steps to prevent the spread of swine flu:

1. Protect yourself and others by washing your hands often
2. Cover your mouth with something other than your hand when you cough
3. If you are sick, see your doctor and try not to expose others to your illness

Illness caused by this new strain of flu has the same symptoms as other strains of flu including fever, lack of energy and appetite, coughing, runny nose, sore throat, and can include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

The regional Public Health Departments are requesting that health care providers arrange for testing of patients who have influenza-like illness, particularly if they have recently traveled to areas where cases have been confirmed and they are requesting increased swine flu surveillance in the region.

Swine flu history

Swine influenza is a respiratory illness related to seasonal influenza. Swine flu is commonly seen in pigs, although occasionally human infections also occur. The most common route of exposure for humans is through contact with pigs; however, none of the ill people are known to have had such contact or link to people who do.

Those who have had swine flu in the United States have experienced mild illness, and have recovered. US hospitals have not reported an increase in serious respiratory illness. All cases were detected through routine surveillance for seasonal influenza.

Although this new strain of flu is called swine flu, humans do not have to have physical contact with pigs to get infected, and swine flu is not spread from eating pork or pork products. Regular flu vaccines do not generally protect against swine flu.

For more information, please visit the Centers for Disease Control website www.cdc.gov/flu/swine/investigation.htm . You may also find additional swine flu information at the Public Contact & Disease Reporting line (541) 322-7418.

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