

Important Health Notice

Information for Healthcare Professionals UPDATE

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This Important Health Notice will clarify information and direct providers to updated tools. We appreciate your patience and feedback in this rapidly changing environment.

It is assumed given the heightened public concern regarding swine influenza that ambulatory care settings may experience an increase in visits. This Notice contains up to date information and links to tools on the management of ambulatory patients who present with influenza like illness (ILI) in Ontario. Given the rapidly evolving epidemiology of the H1N1 swine influenza strain, it is expected that this information will change regularly.

Status Update:

As of April 27th, human cases of swine influenza have been identified in a number of countries worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified swine influenza as a public health emergency of international concern, and has announced an escalation of their pandemic alert phase to Phase Four. Phase Four means that there is verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or a novel human-animal influenza virus that may be able to cause sustained outbreaks in the community. This change indicates an increase in the risk of a pandemic, but does not necessarily mean that a pandemic is imminent.

In Canada, 13 confirmed cases have been announced, including four in Ontario. No emergency declaration has been made in Canada.

Highlights of Changes:

- Laboratory testing for swine influenza A is not recommended at this time in ambulatory patients
- Laboratory testing for swine influenza A is not required in patients without a travel history to Mexico who present to emergency departments
- Treatment recommendations for patients with influenza like illness who have a travel history to Mexico have been updated

Effective April 28, 2009 at 1500 hours:

Four laboratory confirmed cases of swine influenza have been reported in Ontario.

Information on cases in other jurisdictions may be found at:

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/alert-alerte/swine_200904-eng.php;

http://www.who.int/csr/don/2009_04_28/en/index.html;

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu>

The following documents are now posted on the MOHLTC website:

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/ihn.html

Clinical Guidelines for Management of Patients with ILI in Emergency Departments

Clinical Guidelines for Management of Patients with ILI in Ambulatory Settings



These documents are intended to support health care practitioners in caring for patients who have influenza like illness (ILI).

For questions on Important Health Notices, please call the Healthcare Providers Hotline toll free, at 1-866-212-2272. Beginning Monday, April 27th, hours of operation are 0800hrs – 2000hrs. Refer to future IHNs for changes to hours of operation. To register for future Important Health Notices, please go to www.publichealthontario.ca

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