

MONTEREY COUNTY



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Press Release

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Monterey County Health Officer Announces First Probable Cases of H1N1 *Local officials working with state to prevent further infection*

The Monterey County Health Officer, Dr. Hugh Stallworth today announced that Monterey County has 4 probable cases of H1N1 influenza.

“The public is understandably concerned,” said Dr. Stallworth, “with this announcement our messages remain the same, wash your hands, cover your cough and don’t go to work or school when you are sick”

The Monterey County Health Department is conducting flu surveillance and implementing measures to lessen the impact of the flu virus. At this time there are no plans to close schools or limit public gatherings.

The current H1N1 influenza outbreak is caused by an influenza A virus not previously detected in humans or animals. Symptoms are similar to those of seasonal flu and typically include fever, cough and sore throat. Additional symptoms may include headache, chills and fatigue. Persons with H1N1 flu are contagious for up to seven days after the onset of illness and possibly longer if they are still symptomatic.

There is currently no vaccine available to protect against H1N1, but there are actions that people can take to help prevent the spread of germs:

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or into your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water and use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.

People experiencing flu-like symptoms should stay home from work or school, limit contact with others and call their healthcare provider for advice. Additional information for the public about H1N1 is available by calling Monterey County 211.

As a reminder, swine influenza viruses are **not** transmitted by food. You cannot get swine influenza from eating pork or pork products. Eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products are safe.

Dr. Stallworth advises residents to monitor news reports and check the Monterey County Web site at www.co.monterey.ca.us or www.bepreparedcalifornia.ca.gov for additional information.