

Swine flu public health emergency update

As you are probably aware by now, U.S. health officials declared a public health emergency on Sunday after confirming swine flu cases in five states: California, Kansas, New York, Ohio, and Texas. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has deployed staff domestically and internationally to work with officials in those states, Mexico, Canada, and the World Health Organization.

The emergency declaration is standard operating procedure and gives federal, state, and local government agencies access to funds and resources for testing and medications. While they continue their evaluation, CDC offers the following tips on their web site for [What You Can Do to Stay Healthy](#):

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- If you get sick, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

To learn more about swine flu, visit:

- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [Q&A: Swine Influenza and You](#)
- [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#)

A special note regarding children

It is important to remind children to take necessary precautions to reduce the

likelihood of spreading this flu and other diseases. The Mayo Clinic offers some useful [guidelines for proper hygiene](#) on their web site.

The Kids Health Organization also offers talking points that may help communicate to children the importance of washing their hands:

- [Why Do I Need to Wash My Hands?](#)
- [En Espanol](#)

Contact us

If you have a safety or risk management question, please contact Michael Swain with Markel's Risk Management Department at mswain@markelcorp.com.



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