



H1N1 INFLUENZA

Agent Information: H1N1 influenza is caused by an influenza (flu) virus (Novel H1N1 influenza) predominantly found in pig populations. People do not normally get H1N1 influenza, but this strain has the ability to transmit from pigs to humans, and humans to humans. An outbreak of human cases is occurring internationally.

Since this is a unique virus, humans will not have natural immunity. There is the potential that this outbreak can become a pandemic.

Signs and Symptoms: Acute Respiratory Illness – Recent onset of at least two of the following: runny nose or nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, and fever or chills.

Influenza-like Illness - Fever >37.8°C (100°F), plus cough or sore throat.

Suspected Case Definition of H1N1 influenza virus:

1. A person with an acute respiratory illness who was in close contact with a confirmed case of H1N1 influenza infection while the person was ill **OR**
2. A person with an acute respiratory illness with a recent history of contact with an animal with confirmed or suspected H1N1 influenza infection **OR**
3. A person with an acute respiratory illness who has traveled to an area where there are confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza within 7 days of illness onset.

Transmission: Although the method of transmission is unconfirmed, it is suspected to be via airborne droplets from mucosal passages. Airborne transmission occurs when bacteria or viruses travel on dust particles or on small respiratory droplets that may become aerosolized when people sneeze, cough, laugh or exhale.

Protective Measures:

- If PSAP advises that the patient has been screened for and has symptoms of acute febrile respiratory illness symptoms, EMS personnel should apply Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) prior to entering scene.
- ALL patients should be evaluated for potential flu symptoms. When possible, minimize the number of providers who have contact with potential flu patients.
- Follow appropriate Body Substance Isolation (BSI) precautions. Use PPE.
- Recommended PPE for taking care of ill/potentially infected patients includes: disposable gowns, gloves, goggles/face shields and masks.
- Place a surgical mask on all patients with suspected symptoms, using non-rebreather masks when oxygen is required.



Emergency Medical Services

- Personnel engaged in aerosol generating activities (patient nebulizers, bag-valve-mask, suction, intubation and CPR) for suspected and/or confirmed H1N1 influenza cases would follow strict droplet precautions including N95 mask, gloves, goggles/face shields, disposable gowns.
- Alert receiving hospital personnel of the possibility of an infectious patient as soon as possible and consider holding suspected infectious patients in the ambulance until their destination in the hospital is known, rather than immediately moving them into the emergency department.
- Emergency Services Providers who exhibit signs and/or symptoms of H1N1 Flu should refrain from all EMS-related activities until they are well. The CDC recommendation is that persons infected with H1N1 Flu “stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.”

Decontamination:

- Hand washing before and after all patient contacts and contact with patient care equipment.
- After the patient has been removed and prior to cleaning, the air within the vehicle may be exhausted by opening the doors and windows of the vehicle while the ventilation system is running. This should be done outdoors and away from pedestrian traffic.
- Perform a thorough cleaning of the stretcher and all equipment that has come in contact with or been **within 6 feet** of patient, with an approved disinfectant upon completion of the call. When possible, this should be done at the hospital prior to returning to service.
- Dispose of durable goods (disposable masks, gowns) in biohazard containers.
- Providers should change clothing/uniforms as soon as possible after completing a shift, and shower to remove potential viral particles.

Prophylaxis:

General prophylaxis is not recommended at this time. However, if you are someone who has a greater risk of complications from the flu, seek advice from your medical doctor.

Persons at greater risk of complications include:

- People with chronic medical conditions.
- People over age 65 or under age 5.
- Pregnant women.

If you fall into one of these three categories, or live in a household with someone in one of these three categories, seek additional medical advice.

Treatment:

The virus is susceptible to antiviral drugs. Supportive care recommended.

** For additional information in regards to H1N1 influenza, please refer to the CDC website: www.cdc.gov.

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

Revised: 08/2009

Page 2 of 2

Doc. # 35-05-20/09/08/9A