



NEWS RELEASE

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May 26, 2009

UPDATE ON H1N1 INFLUENZA

As of this date, sixteen cases of H1N1 flu (swine flu) have been confirmed in Greenwich residents. The majority of cases involve school age children. All have recovered or are at home recovering. None have required hospitalization.

Director of Health Caroline Baisley said, "To date this virus has been relatively mild in the majority of cases. However, for individuals with underlying medical conditions or compromised immune systems the symptoms could be more severe, even requiring hospitalization. It is possible that some individuals infected with H1N1 have not had symptoms. She cautioned that the number of reported cases of H1N1 most likely do not reflect the true picture of infection in the community. Physicians are being advised to consider treating patients based on influenza-like-illness regardless of rapid test results. Baisley also stated, "Because there are tests pending at the State Laboratory, we anticipate receiving notice of additional confirmed cases."

Like other flu viruses, novel H1N1 flu spreads from an infected person to others primarily from coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people become infected by touching a surface with the virus on it and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Because people with novel H1N1 are thought to be infectious from one day before showing symptoms up to seven days after becoming ill, anyone who experiences influenza-like-illness (ILI) should:

- ✓ Stay home and not attend school or work for ***a minimum of 7 days*** even if symptoms resolve sooner
- ✓ Stay home from school or work until ***at least 24 hours*** after all symptoms have resolved

Symptoms of Influenza-like illness

Fever (100°F or 37.7°C) with cough or sore throat
Other symptoms may include – headache, runny or stuffy nose,
body aches or chills, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

- ✓ Residents are reminded to utilize stringent infection control measures to reduce the spread of influenza, including but not limited to:

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or the crook of your elbow

Wash your hands often with soap and water; use alcohol based hand sanitizer if water is not available

Try not to touch your mouth, nose or eyes

Avoid close contact with people who are sick

Stay home from school, work *and other group activities* if you are sick

For more information on H1N1 (swine flu):

- Greenwich Website: www.greewichct.org
- Connecticut Flu Watch: www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch/swineflu
- Connecticut Department of Public Health: www.ct.gov/dph
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov