

Fact Sheet: H3N2v Influenza

Background

A number of human infections with a variant influenza A H3N2 virus ("H3N2v") have been detected in the United States since August 2011 (see [Case Count: Detected U.S. Human Infections with H3N2v by State since August 2011](#)). These are viruses that do not usually infect people but that occur in pigs and that are very different from human seasonal H3N2 viruses.

More than half of the recent infections with H3N2v have occurred after contact with pigs, but in some cases, the virus seems to have spread from person-to-person. So far spread has not continued beyond one or two people. The symptoms and severity of H3N2v illness have been similar to seasonal flu.

This virus is related to human flu viruses from the 1990s, so adults should have some immunity against these viruses, but young children probably do not. Early steps to make a vaccine against H3N2v have been taken, but no decision to mass produce such a vaccine has been made. (Seasonal vaccine is not designed to protect against H3N2v.) Public health authorities are watching this situation closely.

Take Action to Prevent Influenza Virus Spread Between People

The risk of infection and spread of influenza viruses between people, including H3N2v, can be reduced by taking a combination of actions. CDC recommends you:

- Take everyday preventive actions, including:
 - 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. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand rub may be used.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
 - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - If you are sick, stay home from work or school until your illness is over.