

What is swine flu?



Swine flu is a **new type of flu**. Because it's new, all types of people, old and young, healthy or not, will get sick from it more easily.

It is very similar to normal flu. When you get flu, your body can't fight off other illnesses as easily. So if you have flu, it's more likely you might get a more dangerous illness, like pneumonia.

We think swine flu started in Mexico. Quite a few people in different countries now have this new type of flu, and it is spreading from person to person. **We are trying to stop the problem getting any bigger.**

Why is it called swine flu?



It's called **swine flu** because it's similar to a illness pigs get. This does not mean that any pigs in the UK have it, or that you can catch it from healthy pigs. We are still looking into exactly where it's come from.

You may have heard swine flu being called a **pandemic**. This means that the illness has spread widely, and is in more than one country. It does not mean that swine flu is more harmful.



How can I avoid getting swine flu or passing it on?

You can do **2 things** to help stop swine flu spreading:

- **use a paper tissue** when you sneeze or cough
- **wash your hands** with soap and hot water often

Remember to **put the tissue in the bin** when you're done with it!

You won't need a face mask, because these do not protect you any more than using a tissue, and washing your hands.

Is there anything more I can do?




It might help to **talk to your friends, relatives or neighbours**, and ask them to help you out with medicines and food **if you get sick**. You can agree to do the same for them in return.

You should also keep an eye on the **TV, newspapers, the radio** and the **internet** to find out more about swine flu and how to protect you and your family.


Can swine flu be cured?



Just like any other kind of flu, swine flu can be treated by **resting at home, taking painkillers** when you need to, and **drinking plenty of fluids**.




There are also **drugs** called anti-virals which you can take, that will **help you get better a bit faster**, and help make more dangerous illnesses less likely.



We are working on an injection that will **help stop people getting swine flu**. This will take a few months to make, but when it is ready we will give it to people as soon as possible.

What can I do if I think I have swine flu?



Phone us free on **0800 1 513513** to find out the latest on swine flu. You can also check the **NHS website**.

Still worried?



Phone your **doctor** or **NHS Direct** (England: **0845 4647**, Scotland: **08454 24 24 24**, Northern Ireland: **0800 0514 142**).



- If they tell you to **stay at home**, please try to, as you might spread the illness if you don't. Your friends, neighbours and relatives should be able to help you out.
- However, if your GP or NHS Direct tell you to go to your doctor or the hospital you should. If you feel very ill you can call an ambulance.



**An unofficial
translation of**

“Important information
about swine flu” **from**
Simply Understand.