



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

*“To protect and improve the
health and environment of the
people of Colorado.”*

NEWS

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Colorado Reports First Confirmed Cases of H1N1 (Swine) Flu in State

DENVER – Today the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment reported the first two confirmed cases of H1N1 flu in the state. One case is a woman in her 30s from Arapahoe County who returned from a Mexico cruise and a several-day stay in San Diego. She was not hospitalized and is recovering. The other case is a man in his 40s from Douglas County who works as a baggage handler at DIA. He was hospitalized for three days and will be released today to recover at home.

“As I said on Sunday and Monday, we fully expected to identify Colorado cases of H1N1 flu,” said Ned Calonge, the state’s chief medical officer at the department. “This doesn’t change the state’s approach to the H1N1 flu outbreak.

“It’s important to understand that, at this time in the United States, the H1N1 flu is acting just like seasonal flu. It is a relatively mild disease, though we expect, as with seasonal flu, to see a spectrum of illness. We continue to ask all individuals with mild flu-like illness to stay home. This is regardless of travel history. Children and adolescents with fever should not go to day care or school. Adults with fever should not go to work until their symptoms resolve. Individuals with severe illness, such as difficulty breathing, should contact their health-care provider.”

The symptoms of H1N1 flu in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and may include fever greater than 100 F, sore throat, cough, stuffy nose, chills, headache and body aches, and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with H1N1 flu.

The department advises those who experience influenza symptoms to stay home for seven days after onset of symptoms, or at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.

The state health department also encourages people to take these personal precautions to decrease their chances of getting the flu:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Cover your sneezes and coughs.
- Avoid others with respiratory illnesses.

The case from DIA is a reminder that there are potential exposures in public places. Frequent hand washing or the use of hand sanitizers can protect people who are interacting in public places and prevent the spread of illness. H1N1 flu is passed from person to person, Calonge said, and is not contracted from pigs or by eating pork.

“There are other lab specimens from patients in the pipeline that may confirm additional cases of H1N1 flu in the days and weeks to come,” said Calonge. “If there is evidence of a cluster of H1N1 flu cases that would warrant protective public health measures, we are prepared to employ social distancing measures that would help protect people from coming in contact with individuals who may be contagious.”

This is a rapidly evolving situation, and the state health department is asking people to be alert for changes in its guidance as it learns more, available on the department Web site at

<http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/>.