

Practical Pandemic Preparedness

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2010 BUS & PARATRANSIT CONFERENCE

H1N1 Comes to Our Town

- 4/13/09: 1st confirmed case in U.S.
- 4/26/09: Declared a public health emergency
- 4/27/09: 1st suspected case in Grand Rapids, MI
- 6/11/09: Declared a pandemic by W.H.O.

Breaking Newsletter, Editors' choice, Health »

Kent County health officials investigating possible swine flu case

By John Barnes

April 27, 2009, 3:43PM



AP Photo

Passengers, wearing surgical masks as a precaution against infection, arrive at the airport in Mexico City on Sunday. A Kent County resident who recently returned from Mexico has come down with some of the symptoms associated with swine flu.

Kent County health officials are sending a nasal swab to the state health department to determine if the person tested may be the county's first case of swine flu.

It's Really not "Swine" Flu



But Kissing Not Advised



Employee Concerns

- How Does it Spread?
- Will I Get Sick?
- Will I Lose My Job?
- Who Will Take Care of My Children?
- Will the Shots Hurt Me?



Management Concerns

- Will employees take advantage of relaxed rules?
- Will we have to cut service?
- Will we have to spend a lot of money?
- Will we need to stockpile supplies?

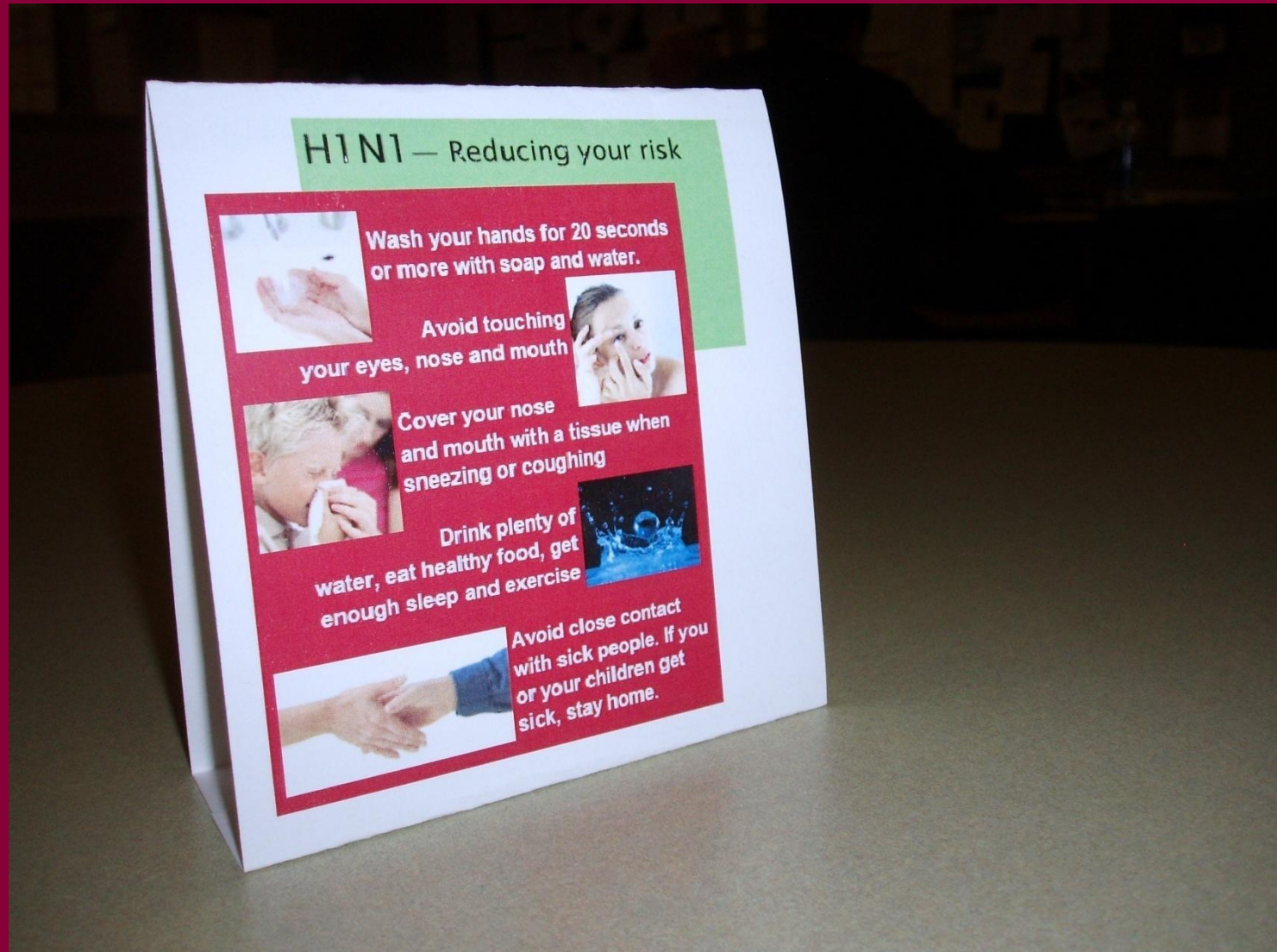


The 5 Basic Protocols

- Wash hands frequently
- Use cough and sneeze etiquette
- Develop healthy habits
- Stay home if sick
- Get vaccinated



Putting Plans into Action



1. Keep Employees Informed

- Local Health Department Fact Sheets
- Materials from CDC or flu.gov

General Public Fact Sheet

Kent County Health Department Fact Sheet H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)



What is H1N1 Influenza?

- H1N1 Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus. Outbreaks of influenza happen regularly among pigs and usually cause high levels of illness and low death rates in pigs. Swine flu was first isolated from a pig in 1930.
- Like all influenza viruses, swine flu viruses change constantly. New viruses that are a mix of swine, human and/or avian (bird) influenza viruses can emerge.

Human Infections

- In late March and early April 2009, human cases of H1N1 influenza A infections were identified internationally and in the United States.
- Vaccines for human seasonal flu are not believed to provide protection from H1N1 flu.

How Does H1N1 Flu Spread?

- Flu viruses are mainly spread from person to person when someone with the virus coughs or sneezes. H1N1 flu is not spread by eating pork or other pork related products.
- People may also become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their eyes, mouth or nose.
- Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick.

Staying Healthy

- Most important: **WASH YOUR HANDS!**
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try not to touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu viruses.
- Try to stay in good general health. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Avoid Contact with Sick People

- If you get sick, it is recommended that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

How Long Can An Infected Person Spread H1N1 Flu?

- People with H1N1 flu virus should be considered potentially contagious as long as they have symptoms and for up to 7 days following the start of illness.
- Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

**Worth Repeating:
Wash Your Hands!**

2. Use Stickers and Posters

- Remind employees to wash hands frequently.



3. Provide Supplies



- Hand sanitizers
- Antiseptic wipes
- Antiseptic sprays
- Nasal tissues
- Gloves?
- Masks (N95)?

Use Other Media

Avoid touching
your eyes, nose
or mouth.



Use Other Media

Stay home if
you're sick.



Lessons Learned

Obstacles

- Union/Management agreements
- Policies that may hinder a good pandemic program
- Convincing management and employees

Suggestions

- Start with a plan
- Pay attention to the details
- Keep the information fresh and up-to-date
- Keep the program simple