



# Influenza A H3N2v



## Background

A number of human infections with a variant influenza A H3N2 virus ("H3N2v") have been detected in the United States since August 2011. These are influenza viruses that usually infect pigs and not people and are very different from human seasonal H3N2 viruses.

H3N2v viruses were responsible for a multi-state outbreak during the summer of 2012 that resulted in 306 cases, including 16 hospitalizations and 1 death. The majority of H3N2v cases identified during 2012 were associated with exposure to pigs at agricultural fairs. To date, no H3N2v infections have occurred in California

Infections with the H3N2v virus have also been identified in 2013. The epidemiology of the 2013 cases is consistent with what was seen last summer, e.g., exposure to pigs, particularly at agricultural fairs.

This virus is related to human influenza viruses from the 1990s. Therefore, adults should have some immunity against these viruses, but young children probably do not. Most of the people who have been infected with H3N2v so far have been children. Early steps to make a vaccine against H3N2v have been taken, but no decision to mass produce such a vaccine has been made. Seasonal influenza vaccine does not protect against H3N2v.

## Persons at Increased Risk of Influenza Complications

- People who are at increased risk of serious influenza complications include children younger than 5 years, people 65 years and older, pregnant women, and people with certain long-term health conditions (like asthma and other lung disease, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems, and neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions).
- Anyone who is at increased risk of influenza complications should avoid pigs and swine barns.

## How to Prevent the Spread of Influenza Viruses between People

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (throw used tissue in the trash).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick, stay home from work or school until your illness is over.

## How to Prevent the Spread of Influenza Viruses between People and Pigs

- Spread from infected pigs to humans happens in the same way that seasonal influenza viruses spread between people; mainly through infected droplets created when an infected pig coughs or sneezes.
- Don't take food or drink into pig areas; don't eat, drink or put anything in your mouth in pig areas.
- Don't take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, strollers, or similar items into pig areas.
- Avoid close contact with pigs if you can.
- Take protective measures if you must come in contact with pigs that are known or suspected to be sick. This includes minimizing contact with pigs and wearing personal protective equipment like protective clothing and gloves and masks that cover your mouth and nose.
- Wash your hands often with soap and running water before and after exposure to pigs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- To further reduce the risk of infection, minimize contact with pigs and swine barns.
- Watch your pig (if you have one) for illness. Call a veterinarian if you suspect illness.
- People can also infect pigs with influenza. Avoid contact with pigs if you have influenza-like symptoms. Wait 7 days after your illness started or until you have been without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer. If you must have contact with pigs while you are sick, take the protective actions listed above.

H3N2v is not transmissible to people through eating properly handled and prepared pork (pig meat) or other products derived from pigs.

## If You Get Sick

Influenza is a respiratory disease; symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, body aches, headaches, and tiredness. Vomiting and diarrhea may occur in some people, most often in children.

- If you develop an influenza-like illness, contact your healthcare provider. Tell them if you have had contact with pigs.
- If you have influenza symptoms and are seeing a healthcare provider, always remember to tell them if you have a condition that increases your risk of influenza complications.
- Your healthcare provider will determine whether influenza testing and antiviral treatment are needed.