



NAVAJO NATION

Division of Health

Bio-Terrorism Preparedness Program



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Navajo Nation on Alert for the H1N1 Influenza

Window Rock – Navajo Division of Health is on alert and preparing to activate emergency operations in response to the H1N1 Influenza. The alert is at Pandemic Alert Phase 4 nationally. The World Health Organization (WHO) has raised the threat level to Phase 5, meaning that a pandemic is eminent and that here is a human-to-human spread of virus in at least two countries in one WHO region. The countries are the United States and Mexico.

NDOH Executive Director Anslem Roanhorse has designated David Nez, Director of Navajo Bio-Terrorism Program, and Dr. Deborah Klaus, Director of the Navajo Epidemiology Center, as the Point of Contact. Mr. Nez is responsible for preparing and mobilizing necessary resources.

Navajo Division of Health has been monitoring the situation since the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) declared a public health emergency on Sunday, April 26, 2009.

The Navajo Division of Health is in contact with Navajo Area IHS, Arizona Department of Health Services and surrounding State agencies, and other public health entities.

The focus is on public education and prevention. Currently NDOH and NAIHS health educators are disseminating pertinent information on swine flu, methods for preventing infection, symptoms of the flu, and what to do in case a person has influenza-like symptoms.

At this point, the primary objective is to contain the spread of swine flu on the Navajo Nation and keep the people safe. No cases have been reported on the Navajo Reservation.

States with confirmed cases of this type of influenza are Arizona, California, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New York, Ohio, and Texas.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed a case of the Swine Flu in Arizona, according to Maricopa County Department of Health Public Information Officer, Jeanene Fowler. An eight year old child residing in Maricopa County has been identified as having contracted Swine Flu and has since recovered.

People can continue to eat pork meats, such as bacon, pork and ham. You will not get sick by eating foods properly prepared.

The H1N1 Influenza is a disease caused by a new influenza virus of swine origin. The influenza is spread mainly when infected people cough or sneeze. Guidelines from health departments for staying healthy include:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- 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. Influenza spreads that way. As people cough into their hands, they will naturally touch door knobs, sink handles or other items that next person may come in contact with.

Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

Develop a family emergency plan as a precaution. This should include storing a supply of food, medicines, facemasks that are rated as N95, and alcohol based hand sanitizers. Additionally, people should stay informed.

Websites to visit for additional information are:

www.pork.org

www.azdhs.gov

www.usda.gov

www.cdc.gov

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