



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TENNESSEE IDENTIFIES FIRST PROBABLE CASE OF NOVEL H1N1 VIRUS

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Health lab has identified the first probable case of the novel H1N1 virus in the state. The specimen will be sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to confirm preliminary results.

“The Tennessee Department of Health is taking all necessary precautions in responding to this public health emergency,” said Governor Phil Bredesen. “As diagnosis of the illness continues, we must following the guidance of the state and federal health officials by staying home when we are sick and practicing good hygiene by washing our hands frequently. These small steps will help slow the spread of this illness.”

The patient is a Williamson County resident, who is receiving treatment for symptoms at home, is recovering from the illness, and has a good prognosis. The Tennessee Department of Health is working with local officials to identify and provide antiviral medication to the patient’s family and close contacts. Anyone identified as a close contact of the patient will be notified by the Department.

“It’s important to note that more human cases of swine flu will be detected in Tennessee because of expanded testing and surveillance,” said State Health Commissioner Susan R. Cooper, MSN, RN. “People should be alert to developing news and information about this virus, but should not panic based on this probable case. The more you know, the more you can do to ensure your family’s health.”

Human cases of the H1N1 virus infection have been identified both in the U.S. and internationally. While this is the first probable case in Tennessee, new cases are being identified daily in other states and counties.

The Tennessee Department of Health is conducting active surveillance to determine if any individuals in Tennessee have this strain of the influenza virus. The Department is also collaborating with U.S. Health and Human Services to ensure the state has adequate medical supplies and necessary medications on hand should they be needed.

As of today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed 91 human cases of this strain of flu infection in the U.S. The most current information, as well as a state-by-state breakdown, can be found on the CDC Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

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Tennessee residents who think they may be ill with the flu or flu-like illness should contact their health care provider. Symptoms of the illness are as follows: fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed. If you become ill and experience any warning signs, seek emergency medical care. In children, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

The Department of Health recommends frequent hand washing with warm soapy water, keeping hands away from your face, eyes and mouth, and covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or tissue. These precautions can also help prevent the spread of other illnesses including the common cold.

For more information about the current flu outbreak, visit the Department of Health Web site at <http://health.state.tn.us/swineflu.htm>. Additional information is also available at the CDC's Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>.

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