

*The current cases of swine flu (H1N1), which have infected persons in the United States, Mexico, Canada, and other countries, is a rapidly evolving public health concern, which is being closely monitored by health officials around the globe. There are no cases of swine influenza A in New Jersey residents to date.*

### **What is swine flu?**

Swine Influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that causes regular outbreaks in pigs. People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen. CDC has determined that this current strain of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, it not known how *easily* the virus spreads between people.

### **What are the signs and symptoms of swine flu in people?**

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include:

- Fever
- Body aches
- Fatigue
- Chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat

Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. In the past, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported with swine flu infection in people.

### **How does swine flu spread?**

Spread of this swine influenza A (H1N1) virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

### **What Schools Should Do:**

There is no vaccine available right now to protect against swine flu. ***Remind and encourage all students and staff to apply the everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that can cause respiratory illnesses like influenza,*** including:

- Covering nose and mouth with a tissue or shirt sleeve when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash after use, and immediately wash hands.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective. Make sure that it is at least 60% alcohol.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If a student or staff member is sick with influenza, they should stay home and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

### **The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission:**

- Continues to monitor its computerized communicable disease tracking system for potential cases of swine flu in towns served.
- Communicates with other local and state public health agencies to remain abreast of international and national status.
- Continues to update its website – [www.middlebrookhealth.org](http://www.middlebrookhealth.org) – as new information becomes available.

**Continue to check these websites for the most current information:**

- ♦ [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) ♦ [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health) ♦ [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov) ♦ [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) ♦

