# CDPH California Deparament of PublicHealth

#### California Department of Public Health – August 2012

### 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 viruses that do not usually infect people but that occur in pigs and are very different from human seasonal H3N2 viruses.

More than half of the recent infections with H3N2v have occurred after contact with pigs, but in some cases, the virus seems to have spread from person-to-person. So far spread has not continued beyond one or two people. The symptoms and severity of H3N2v illness have been similar to seasonal flu.

This virus is related to human flu viruses from the 1990s, so 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 vaccine is not designed to protect against H3N2v.

## Take Action to Prevent the Spread of Flu Viruses Between People

- Take everyday preventive actions, including:
  - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. (Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.)
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, an alcoholbased hand rub may be used.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
     Germs spread that way.
  - Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
  - o If you are sick, stay home from work or school until your illness is over.

#### Take Action to Prevent the Spread of Flu Viruses Between People and Pigs

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and running water before and after exposure to animals.
- Never eat, drink or put things in your mouth in animal areas.
- Young children, pregnant women and people 65 and older should be extra careful around animals.

- If you have animals including swine watch them for signs of illness and call a veterinarian if you suspect they might be sick.
- Avoid close contact with animals that look or act ill, when possible, and
- Avoid contact with pigs if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms.

If you must come in contact with pigs while you are sick, or if you must come in contact with pigs known or suspected to be infected, or their environment, you should use appropriate protective measures (for example, wear protective clothing, gloves, masks that cover your mouth and nose, and other personal protective equipment) and practice good respiratory and hand hygiene.

It should be noted that swine influenza has not been shown to be transmissible to people through eating properly handled and prepared pork (pig meat) or other products derived from pigs.

#### If You Get Sick

- If you live in an area where H3N2v cases have been identified recently and develop flu like illness, contact your health care provider. Tell them if you have had contact with pigs or with other sick people.
- If you live in an area where no H3N2v has been detected and are seeking treatment, tell your health care provider if you have had contact with pigs.
- Also, whenever you have flu symptoms and are seeing a health care provider, always remember to tell them if you have asthma, diabetes, heart disease, neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions, are pregnant, or are older than 65 or younger than 5 years.
- Flu symptoms usually include fever and respiratory symptoms, such as cough and runny nose, and possibly other symptoms, such as body aches, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea.
- Health care providers will determine whether influenza testing and possible treatment are needed.
- There are influenza antiviral drugs that can be used to treat infection with H3N2v viruses as well as seasonal influenza viruses.