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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.



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3796	17/11/2016	19/12/2016	Delhi	www.indiatoday.intoday.in.com/English http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/swine-flu-epidemic-delhi-influenza-a-h1n1-aiims/1/836682.html
Title:	Swine flu scare returns to Delhi as 3 test positive at AIIMS			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU-Delhi			

The deadly swine flu has returned to the Capital, piggybacking on the winter chill. Two patients have tested positive at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and one at the neighbouring Safdarjung Hospital. The reported cases are the season's first in the national Capital that saw over 4,000 patients last winter with a dozen deaths.

"People diagnosed with influenza cases bearing fewer complexities have been reported in the past one month. However, at least two patients have tested positive for swine flu till now," Dr Randeep Guleria, who heads the respiratory division at AIIMS, told Mail Today. In 2009-10, the H1N1 swine flu pandemic spread from central Mexico to 74 other countries including India, killing an estimated 2,84,000 people, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ABOUT THE DISEASE

The respiratory illness originated in pigs, but is now a human disease spread by coughing and sneezing. Symptoms are similar to those produced by standard, seasonal flu - fever, cough, sore throat, body aches and chills. Vulnerable groups

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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include pregnant women, children under five, the over-65s and those with serious medical conditions. Dr Guleria said influenza treatment is being given to the patients based on health ministry guidelines. "We have adequate amount of the drug Tamiflu, diagnostic kits and other equipment required for treatment of the disease. Currently, there is nothing to raise worries about an epidemic of the kind seen last year," he said.

According to health ministry guidelines, to prevent and contain the outbreak of Influenza-A H1N1 virus, screening, testing and isolation of the patient is done at both government and private hospitals. Category A and B patients are the ones with mild fever plus cough/sore throat with or without body ache, headache, diarrhoea and vomiting. They should be treated for the symptoms, which may require home isolation and Oseltamivir. The patients should be monitored for their progress and reassessed at 24 to 48 hours by the doctor.

No testing of the patient for H1N1 is required. Patients should confine themselves at home and avoid mixing with public and high-risk members in the family. Category C patients are the one complaining of breathlessness, chest pain, drowsiness, fall in blood pressure, sputum mixed with blood, bluish discolouration of nails, etc. These include children with influenza-like illness who had a severe disease as manifested by the red flag signs (Somnolence, high and persistent fever, inability to feed well, convulsions, shortness of breath, difficulty in breathing, etc).

All these patients require testing, immediate hospitalisation and treatment. At Safdarjung Hospital, one patient has been diagnosed with swine flu. "He is in critical condition and undergoing treatment in ICU," a senior doctor told Mail Today. RML Hospital too is reportedly examining some suspected cases. Experts say such cross-species infections occur most commonly when people are in close proximity to large numbers of pigs, such as in barns, livestock exhibits at fairs, and slaughterhouses. "When the severity of the infection increases in the body it affects lungs, causing breathlessness and posing a threat to life," said Dr Guleria. India recorded over 1,800 deaths during the 2009-10 swine flu pandemic, with 600 of them reported in Maharashtra. A 2013 outbreak killed at least 600 people.

The most common cause of death is respiratory failure, apart from pneumonia (leading to sepsis) high fever (leading to neurological problems), dehydration (from excessive vomiting and diarrhoea), electrolyte imbalance and kidney failure. Some of the same antiviral drugs that are used to treat seasonal flu also work against H1N1 swine flu. Oseltamivir (Tamiflu), peramivir (Rapivab), and zanamivir (Relenza) seem

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to work best, although some kinds of swine flu don't respond to oseltamivir, say experts. With the decreasing temperature, cases of swine flu are likely to go up, said doctors, as the virus becomes more active in dropping temperature. "For preventive measures, people should use masks in crowded places," Dr Guleria said, adding that good standards of hygiene must be followed. Recommendations to prevent spread of the virus among humans include using standard infection control, such as frequent washing of hands with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand sanitizers, especially after being out in public. Chance of transmission is also reduced by disinfecting household surfaces, which can be done effectively with a diluted chlorine bleach solution.

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