

Influenza A(H1N1) Frequently Asked Questions:

About the disease

1 May 2009

How do people become infected with influenza A(H1N1)?

Outbreaks in humans are now occurring from human-to-human transmission. When infected people cough or sneeze, infected droplets get on their hands, drop onto surfaces, or are dispersed into the air. Another person can breathe in contaminated air, or touch infected hands or surfaces, and be exposed. To prevent spread, people should cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing, and wash their hands regularly.

What are the signs and symptoms of infection?

Early signs of influenza A(H1N1) are flu-like, including fever, cough, headache, muscle and joint pain, sore throat and runny nose, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhoea.

Regarding study of the first outbreak, have you received any feedback from the WHO team sent to Mexico to investigate the outbreak?

Teams are already sending epidemiological evidence but we will know more over the next few days.

Is there any confirmation of transmission between pigs and humans at this point?

No.

Is there any information on the economic impact of the outbreak so far?

No.

Why are we so worried about this pandemic possibility when thousands die every year from seasonal epidemics?

Seasonal epidemics occur every year and we are able to treat the virus with seasonal vaccines. A pandemic is a worldwide epidemic. It is a new virus and one to which the populations will have no immunity.

Related link

[Influenza \(seasonal\) fact sheet](#)