



For Immediate Release:

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Enjoy the Fair, Avoid the Flu

Information on H3N2v, and tips for staying healthy at fairs and exhibits

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health would like to remind all residents to practice healthy hygiene and to take extra precautions while visiting fairs, livestock exhibits, or other events where pigs might be present. A new influenza variation, called H3N2 variant (H3N2v) which can pass from pigs to people, has been detected in several states throughout the country over the past year, and recent cases indicate those infected were exposed to sick pigs at fairs and live animal markets.

“The H3N2v has not been detected in California so far, but we are susceptible to this illness. The same precautions that you would take during the regular flu season, such as washing your hands, coverings your coughs and sneezes, and staying home if you are sick, still apply. Additionally, there are some extra precautions you should take if you plan to visit a fair or exhibit where pigs will be present,” said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health and Health Officer.

Additional precautions to protect against H3N2v:

- Minimize contact with pigs and pig arenas.
- Avoid drinking, eating, or putting anything into your mouth while in an area with pigs.
- Avoid taking children’s toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, or strollers into an area with pigs.
- Wash your hands with soap and running water after any exposure to pigs. If soap and running water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Individuals who are at risk of developing severe flu complications, including children younger than five, those with chronic medical conditions and/or weakened immune systems, pregnant women, and those 65 years and older, should avoid pigs and pig arenas.
- Individuals with flu-like symptoms should avoid contact with pigs for at least seven days after the start of illness or until they have been without fever for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medications, whichever is longer.
- Individuals at risk for flu complications (due to age or a medical condition) who have been in contact with pigs and develop flu symptoms should tell their health care provider of their exposure to pigs. Prescription antiviral drugs can be used to treat H3N2v flu if they are received in a timely manner.
- Follow all health and safety guidelines posted at the fair or exhibit you are visiting.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) state that nearly 300 cases of H3N2v have been reported in multiple states, with the majority of cases reported in the Midwest. Though there has been limited person-to-person spread with this virus, H3N2v is not spreading readily from person-to-person at this time. Symptoms of H3N2v so far have been mostly mild and similar to seasonal flu. For more information on H3N2v, visit the CDC's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/h3n2v-outbreak.htm>.

Public Health would also like to remind all residents that the upcoming flu season begins this month and can last through the following May. Seasonal flu vaccines will protect against the primary types of human flu likely to circulate this season, though they are not expected to prevent H3N2v. Seasonal flu vaccine is available in many doctor's offices, pharmacies, and community health clinics now, with more locations expected to receive vaccine over the next several weeks. Residents are encouraged to contact their regular healthcare provider to arrange for a flu vaccine. Public Health clinics will begin offering limited seasonal flu vaccines starting in late October. Those without a regular healthcare provider or health insurance coverage can call the LA County Information Line at 2-1-1 from any landline or cell phone within the county, or visit www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip, for referrals to providers offering immunizations at no-charge or a reduced charge.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises nearly 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: LAPublicHealth.

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