

Important notice about the new influenza

Many countries including Mexico, USA and Canada have officially reported the cases of the new influenza (influenza A(H1N1)) infection. We really appreciate for your cooperation in order to maintain the medical care system for the community.

Countries which have reported the patients of the new influenza (7 May 2009): Mexico, the United States, Canada, Austria, China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Costa Rica, Colombia, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, Israel, Italy Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

If you have cold-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore-throat, etc) and meet at least one of the criteria showing below:
(1) who entered Japan in recent 10 days from the endemic area for the new influenza,
(2) who met the person who entered Japan from the endemic area for the new influenza and has cold symptoms,
(3) who are worried about having gotten the new influenza,
please contact the health center of your residential area first, not to come directly to Tohoku University Hospital.

Phone number for the health center (24 hours/7 days)

Sendai city		Outside of Sendai	
Aoba ward	022(225)7211	Ishinomaki	0225(95)1411
Miyagino ward	022(291)2111	Shiogama	022(363)5502
Wakabayashi ward	022(282)1111	Osaki	0229(91)0701
Taihaku ward	022(247)1111	Kesenuma	0226(22)6661
Izumi ward	022(372)3111	Sennan	0224(53)3111
		Kurihara	0228(22)2113
		Tome	0220(22)6111

The new influenza virus (influenza A (H1N1)) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This virus is spreading from person-to-person, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread. This virus was originally referred to as "swine flu" because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs in North America. But two genes are really different from the genes of regular swine influenza viruses, which may cause spreading of the new virus from person-to-person.

The symptoms of this new influenza virus in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human influenza and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.

Main endemic area is Mexico, USA and Canada. We need to see carefully about the spreading of the new influenza in other areas including EU and Asia. In Japan no patient of the new influenza has been reported.

Spread of this 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 by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. Therefore, to practice general preventive measures for influenza is important to prevent infection:

- wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often;
- avoid close contact with people who have fever and cough;
- practice good health habits including adequate sleep, eating nutritious food, and keeping physically active.
- cover your mouth and nose with mask carefully when coughing or sneezing.