STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

NICK LYON
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Aug. 10, 2018

CONTACT: Lynn Sutfin
517-241-2112
SutfinL1@michigan.gov

Influenza A H1N2 variant identified by CDC in Michigan residents with exposure to swine

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is reporting that Influenza A (H1N2)v has been identified as the strain that sickened two attendees of the Fowlerville Family Fair following exposure to swine. Respiratory samples from ill individuals were sent to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for additional testing, after initially testing positive for Influenza A at the MDHHS Laboratory last week. This H1N2v strain is similar to the viruses currently circulating in swine.

These are among the first influenza A (H1N2)v virus infections identified in the U.S. in 2018. Two additional cases have been identified in California. None of the patients were hospitalized, and all are recovering from their illness. No human-to-human transmission has been identified to date. Investigation of additional ill fair attendees is ongoing.

Since reporting of novel influenza A viruses began nationally in 2005, only 17 human infections of influenza A (H1N2)v – including these two Michigan cases – have been reported to CDC.

Swine influenza is a respiratory disease in pigs caused by type A influenza viruses that regularly circulate among swine. Swine influenza viruses do not usually infect humans, but human infections have been reported. People cannot get swine influenza from eating properly prepared pork or handling pork products – only from contact with an ill pig.

The fair took place July 23-28, and several pigs from the fair tested positive for swine influenza on July 27.

Symptoms of swine influenza in people are similar to the seasonal flu and can include fever, cough, runny nose, and sometimes body aches, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. On rare occasions, swine influenza in humans can lead to severe diseases, such as pneumonia or death.

Those at higher risk of developing complications if they get swine influenza include children younger than five years of age, people 65 years of age and older, pregnant women and people with certain chronic health issues, such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems and neurological conditions.

- MORE -

Currently, there is no vaccine for swine influenza, and the seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against it. However, antiviral drugs, such as Tamiflu and Relenza, are effective in treating swine influenza. Early treatment works best and may be especially important for people with a high-risk condition.

Steps you can take to protect yourself and prevent the spread of any illness:

- Refrain from eating or drinking in livestock barns or show rings.
- Do not take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, strollers or similar items into pig areas.
- Anyone who is at high risk of serious flu complications and is planning to attend a fair should avoid pigs and swine barns.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid contact with pigs if you have flu-like symptoms.
- If you are sick, stay home from work or school until your illness is over.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

For more information on minimizing the transmission of illness at livestock exhibitions, visit the USDA website. For more information on swine influenza, visit the CDC website.

# # #