



Swine Influenza

30 April 2009 at 12.50pm

Media Release 4

Note: We will be holding a media tele-conference at 3.45 today with Otago and Southland Medical Officer of Health Dr Derek Bell. Please phone 083033 and then PIN number 844594.

We would also appreciate it if the media could help inform people about the measures they can take to help themselves e.g. hand washing etc.

We are one of the few areas in the country which does not have any suspected cases of swine flu – we would like to keep it that way.

None of the people in Otago and Southland who were on the affected flight NZ1 have any symptoms.

We had four more people contact us yesterday to say they had been on flight NZ1. They are tourists and had been travelling unaware they were being sought and do not have symptoms, Otago and Southland Chief Medical Officer Dr Derek Bell said.

Some of the Otago-Southland people on the flight are due to come out of voluntary quarantine. They began their course of anti-viral medication Tamiflu on Monday night so their quarantine period will come to an end tomorrow, Friday.

Most other Otago-Southland people's quarantine will end on Saturday. Public Health South staff continue to be in regular contact with people in quarantine.

Other actions we are taking include:

- Continuing to have nurses stationed at airports to support border control staff for international flights
- Sending schools and early childhood centres in Otago-Southland letters encouraging them to review their pandemic planning procedures, and to report any increased levels of sickness in their community
- Asking medical Centres to check their stocks of personal protective equipment - such as masks, gowns and gloves – and to review their pandemic plans
- Notifying health professionals that nationwide they now need to notify Medical Officers of Health whenever they diagnose anyone with swine flu
- Notifying health professionals everyone diagnosed with suspected swine is eligible for the same care as New Zealanders regardless of their country of origin

We would like to remind people with concerns about swine flu to either phone the national free healthline on 0800 611 116 or their medical centre. They should not just show up at hospitals or medical centres.

People can be their own best protection against this illness by remembering to CHIRP:

Cover your mouth when you cough

Hands – wash them often

Isolate yourself by maintaining a personal space of 1.5m and stay home if you are sick

Reduce germs in your home and workplace by cleaning with disinfectant;

Prepare yourself and your family by creating an emergency plan and influenza kit.

The best way to wash your hands is:

Figure 1. Hand Hygiene Technique



1. Palm to palm.



2. Right palm over left back of hand



3. Palm to palm fingers interlaced and left palm over right back of hand.



4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked.



5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa.



6. Rotational rubbing backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.

Reference: Hand washing technique
(Alliffe et al 1978; Lawrence 1985)

People should use the 20-20 rule – wash their hands for 20 seconds with warm soapy water and dry thoroughly with clean towels or paper towels for another 20 seconds.

We also recommend workplaces review and update plans for managing a major infection event in their workplace and that people keep themselves informed, for example by listening to the radio or reading international web sites.

www.who.int/en/
www.cdc.gov/
www.moh.govt.nz

**For further information please contact Otago District Health Board
communications officer Gail Goodger on 027 567 8281.**