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May 2009 Newsletter:

Swine Flu Pandemic Coming? What to do to avoid risks!

Dear Patients & Friends:

By April 29, 2009, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta reported that 91 cases of Swine Flu infection had been confirmed in 10 U.S. states, including 51 in New York, 15 in Texas, and 14 in California, already resulting in one death.

In Mexico by contrast, where there are 2,137 suspected cases, 1,995 have been hospitalized and 149 have already died of the influenza, after the emerging pandemic began only a month earlier possibly when a child was infected near a pig farm.

Swine flu is no joke. The first pandemic in 1918 during World War I resulted in millions of deaths world wide, and was finally traced to an allied base where soldiers had been exposed to both pigs and fowl. When they returned home, they quickly carried the flu across the globe. Although scientists incorrectly predicted further outbreaks in the past decades, no significant outbreaks occurred until this past month, centered in Mexico.

Is the current swine flu going to be as bad as it was nearly a century ago? Probably not, and in fact this may not be any worse than other strains of flu that we normally face. A century ago we did not know about viruses, how they spread, nor did we have penicillin or anti-viral drugs. Imagine that we even used out-houses that did not have hand sanitizers nor soap and water for washing hands☺

At risk populations including the elderly, pregnant mothers and infants, and others with weak immunity should be especially wary.

The prodrome for influenza, or the time after you are infected but before you have flu-specific symptoms, may last only one day, and typically includes body aches, coldness and

From the U.S. Centers for Disease Control:

What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

- Stay informed. This website will be updated regularly as information becomes available.
- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing of infected people.
- **Take everyday actions to stay healthy.**
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
 - Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Develop a family emergency plan as a precaution. This should include storing a supply of food, medicines, facemasks, alcohol-based hand rubs and other essential supplies.
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information, or go to www.cdc.gov

fatigue. However, rapidly developing high fever and extreme fatigue quickly distinguishes the flu from the common cold.

CDC guidelines advise schools to close for 14 days if a single case of swine influenza from the student body is confirmed. Further, if more than one school and/or childcare facility in the same area have confirmed cases of H1N1 or non-subtypable influenza A cases, CDC recommends preemptively dismissing students from neighboring schools in that area, even from schools without laboratory-confirmed cases, for 14 days, in consultation with state public health officials.

Schools are also advised that when they re-open, commonly touched surfaces such as: stairway railings, elevator buttons, and door handles, should be kept clean by wiping them down with detergent-based cleaners or EPA registered disinfectants usually used in school settings.

Parents should plan for caring for children who are dismissed from schools, including use of a single caregiver to care for the children of two or three families, since studies suggest that childcare group size of five or fewer children are associated with fewer respiratory infections, according to the CDC.

For More Resources on this subject:

- To read about CDC Swine flu guidelines, caregiver and healthcare provider instructions and initiatives:

http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm

You may access these links online, at: www.drleach.com click on **Newsletters, May 2009: Swine Flu Pandemic Coming? What to do to avoid risks!**

How can I treat the Swine Flu?

Seek medical help:

- *Four antiviral drugs are approved for use in the United States (oseltamivir, zanamivir, amantadine and rimantadine). These are proven to stop the virus from replicating in your body, and may be taken even before symptoms occur if you believe you have been exposed to the virus.*
- *Immunization may be available soon, and is especially important for the elderly, healthcare workers and providers commonly exposed to the virus, and others at risk.*

Can chiropractic help?

We do not know whether chiropractic care can help you get over H1N1 or any viral infection, so medical care should be your first choice after you suspect you have an infection.

However, there is evidence chiropractic care is more effective than placebo or massage in boosting some elements of immunity, and patients receiving osteopathic care (similar to chiropractic and includes manipulations like chiropractors perform) had lower rates of sickness and death during the Swine Flu Pandemic of 1918.

Further, modern clinical research has demonstrated seniors recover faster from pneumonia when they receive both antibiotics and osteopathic care, including manipulations, compared with antibiotics and placebo osteopathy. So stay fit, eat right, watch your stress, reduce your exposure to the flu, and consider keeping your maintenance care chiropractic adjustments during this pending crisis.

If you get the flu, how long are you infectious to others?

According to the CDC: "children are likely to be infectious for about 7-10 days after the onset of illness." Flu viruses themselves can remain infectious:

- *For about 1 wk at human body temperature*
- *Over 30 days at 32 degrees temperature*
- *Much longer at even lower temperatures.*

Flu viruses are killed or inactivated by:

- *Disinfectants and detergents*
- *Common soap as a result of frequent hand washing.*