

No Swine Flu Cases Diagnosed in North Idaho

An outbreak of swine flu in at least five states has prompted a declaration throughout the United States of a public health emergency. Although no cases of swine flu have been diagnosed in the five northern counties of Idaho, Panhandle Health District (PHD) is working with health care providers, schools, governments and more in the region to monitor the situation.

About 7,000 doses of antiviral medication are heading to northern Idaho from the federal stockpile. The antivirals should arrive within a week. The medication is for people diagnosed with swine flu and will be distributed to health care providers, if needed.

PHD is asking the public to be aware of swine flu symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also have reported diarrhea and vomiting. People with symptoms who have traveled recently or have been around anyone who has traveled recently to Mexico are advised to see a healthcare professional.

The flu virus travels through the air and spreads quickly. People can spread the virus before they notice symptoms. To help prevent spread and infection, PHD reminds people to:

- Wash hands often and particularly after sneezing or coughing. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cough your cough or sneeze or cough into your sleeve.
- Stay home if you're sick to protect your co-workers and friends.
- Keep your distance from people who are sick.