Written by Brandi Phillips
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We have all heard about something called the Swine Flu (H1N1 Flu)? What exactly is Swine Flu and how does a person get it? How can we be vaccinated against the virus? Once a person has been infected with Swine Flu, what can be done to treat it?

I have heard so much about Swine Flu is has become somewhat irritating. I am not saying that educating the public about Swine Flu is not important, because I think it is very important. This is a newer virus and we need to find a treatment or a cure so we can save lives in the future. However, we need not get lost on this health concern, but rather talk about this and other health concerns as well.

For this article, I will discuss with readers what Swine Flu is thought to be at this time as well as possible ways to avoid, treat and vaccinate.

Swine Flu was discovered in April 2009. It is a highly contagious virus that spreads from person to person, and was listed as a worldwide pandemic on July 11, 2009 by the World Health Organization (WHO). It is called the Swine Flu because its symptoms resemble the flu virus that has been found in pigs (swine) from Europe and Asia- as well as in bird and human genes.

It was reported the week of August 10, 2009, on most media networks, including CNN and MSNBC, that 51 U.S. soldiers serving in Iraq had been diagnosed with the Swine Flu virus and then treated. There were still 71 suspect cases that are still in isolation from the rest of the population at the time of this report (AP).

The spread of the H1N1 Flu is similar to that of the regular season flu that most of us have experienced. Common symptoms are fever, headache and body ache, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, diarrhea and possibly chills and fatigue. At its worse the virus can include serious illness requiring hospitalization and it may even cause death.

Those who may be at a higher risk, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, are those who have dealt with diabetes, asthma, heart or kidney disease and those woman who are pregnant, based on a weakened immune system. Infection from one person to the next can occur anywhere from one day before or 5-7 days after the infected person becomes physically ill.

Prevention and Treatment

As with other viruses such as colds and the flu:

Cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw away the tissue immediately in a trash receptacle that is covered or flush it in the toilet. This prevents germs from spreading in the air.
Wash your hands often with warm soap and water.

Avoid touching you eyes, nose and mouth this is how disease and germs are spread.
Avoid being up close and personal with sick people.

If you are sick the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24-hours after your fever is gone.
There is currently no vaccine that is available to prevent and cure Swine Flu, but there are a couple of company's that are doing some trial testing on individuals who are willing to do so.

If you think you have been infected with the H1N1 Swine Flu virus, immediately contact your health care professional. Also avoid contact with others and try you best to be hygienic, in order to avoid spreading the virus.

Brandi Phillips is a life skills coach and personal trainer specializing in cultivating health children and sustaining healthy seniors.

Brandi is looking for individuals to feature in upcoming *Insight* issues who have had a success in dealing with a health and wellness concern. Successes include but are not limited to weight loss, diabetes, stroke, cancer, amputation, lupus, sickle cell, and anxiety. Please email your suggestions, comments or questions to bodybybrandiva@gmail.com
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