

# KEY FACTS for People Exhibiting Pigs at Fairs

Pigs may be infected with swine influenza (flu) type A viruses that are different from seasonal influenza A viruses in people. Influenza viruses that normally spread among pigs (swine influenza viruses) do not commonly infect humans. However, sporadic human infections with influenza A viruses that spread in pigs have occurred. When this happens, these viruses are called "[variant influenza A viruses](#)."

Spread of influenza A viruses from a pig to a person is thought to happen in the same way that human flu viruses spread, mainly through droplets when infected pigs cough or sneeze. This has happened in different settings, including at fairs where pigs from many places come in close contact with each other and with people. Even if a pig is healthy before a fair, pigs can become infected with swine influenza A viruses while at a fair following close contact with infected pigs. This is why CDC recommends that people at higher risk of flu complications take precautions at agricultural fairs.

Contact with pigs is the main risk factor for infection with variant influenza A viruses. Most illness with these viruses has been mild, but serious illness, including illness resulting in hospitalization, has happened. To protect those most likely to get infected and develop serious illness, CDC recommends exhibitors (and their friends or family) take the following actions to help prevent the spread of influenza A viruses between pigs and people.



## Recommendations for Fair Exhibitors at Higher Risk of Serious Flu Complications:

- [Anyone at higher risk of serious flu complications](#) planning to attend a fair where pigs will be present should avoid pigs and swine barns at the fair.
- This includes pig exhibitors and family members who are at higher risk of serious flu complications.
- This may mean that exhibitors at higher risk for serious flu complications do not show their pig(s) or have someone else show their pigs.
- If people at higher risk cannot avoid exposure to pigs, they should wear a well-fitting mask that covers the nose and mouth (e.g., an N95 respirator or KN95 respirator if available, or if not available, a surgical mask) to reduce the risk of exposure to influenza A viruses from pigs.

## Who is at higher risk of serious illness from variant influenza virus infections?

- People who are at higher risk for serious complications from flu, including variant influenza A viruses, include children younger than 5 years, people 65 years and older, pregnant people, and people with certain long-term health conditions (like asthma and other lung diseases, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems, neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions).
- Most of the people hospitalized because of human infections with variant influenza A virus infections have had one of these risk factors for serious illness from flu.

## Recommendations for Fair Exhibitors Not at High Risk:

- If you are responsible for the care of pigs, watch them for illness (like loss of appetite, cough or runny nose). Call a veterinarian if you suspect illness.
- Avoid close contact with pigs that look or act ill and notify the fair veterinarian and/or the fair manager that your pig may be ill.
- Take protective measures if you must come in contact with pigs that are known or suspected to be sick. This includes wearing protective clothing, gloves, and well-fitted masks that cover your mouth and nose (e.g., an N95 respirator or KN95 respirator if available, or if not available, a surgical mask) when contact is required.



## As always, take the following preventive actions:

- Don't eat, drink, or put anything in your mouth in the pig barn and show arena.
- Don't take toys, pacifiers, cups, bottles, strollers, or similar items into the pig barn and show arenas.
- Wash your hands often with soap and running water before and after exposure to pigs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home to avoid spreading your illness.

## What to do if you get sick:

- Flu signs and symptoms usually include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea.
- If you are at higher risk for flu complications and you get flu symptoms, call a health care provider. Tell them about any risk factors that put you at higher risk of serious flu complications and your symptoms. If you have had recent exposure to pigs, tell them about that too.
- If you are not at higher risk and you get flu symptoms after exposure to pigs, seek medical care as you normally would and tell the health care provider about your recent exposure to pigs or swine barns.
- A health care provider can decide whether influenza testing or antiviral treatment is needed.
- Flu antiviral drugs can treat a human infection with an influenza A virus from pigs as well as seasonal flu illness in people.
- Antiviral drugs for influenza work best when antiviral treatment is started shortly after symptoms begin so seek medical treatment promptly if you get symptoms and are at higher risk of flu complications.

