

Swine Flu [wine influenza, influenza A (H1N1)] has proven to be one of the most menacing diseases in the recent past. Some of the people are also considering the disease to be the Seventh killer plague in the history. With hundreds of deaths and thousands of confirmed cases across 99 countries (As on 20th June 2009), the deadly H1N1 virus is surely spreading its web across the globe. So what is Swine Flu and what can you do for protecting yourself from this deadly virus? Here is our attempt to answer these questions.

### **What Is Swine Flu?**

Swine Flu is a respiratory disease which has elements of a virus found in pigs. The disease can lead to pandemic flu outbreak as it spreads from Human to Human. The Pandemic flu differs from ordinary flu as it appears in a human body and spreads from person to person. Being a new virus, the chances of having immunity in a human being towards it is quite less even if the person is a fit adult or a young school going kid.

### **Reasons for its cause**

The viruses which cause the flu are made of small particles that can spread through the droplets which come out of your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough. If you sneeze or cough without covering your nose and mouth with a tissue, other people might breathe those dangerous droplets in. Even if you sneeze or cough in your hand, the droplets still might pass to others through the hard surfaces you might touch which is why; items like cell phones, computers, door handles and TV remote are common surfaces where the virus might be found.

### **Symptoms**

You might be able to catch the Swine Flu earlier than others if you recognize the following symptoms of it:

- Sudden dizziness
- Cough or shortness of breath
- Pain in the chest or abdomen
- Headache
- Persistent vomiting
- Sore throat
- Aching muscles
- Tiredness
- Runny nose
- Chills

- Sneezing
- Loss of appetite

### **Precautions**

The best way to protect yourself from Swine Flu is to maintain a hygienic environment around you. If you follow good hygienic practices, you might be able to curtail the growth of the virus around you. It is important to:

- Carry the tissue every time
- Cover your mouth with clean tissues when sneezing or coughing
- Throw the tissue in the bin after a single use
- Wash your hands with soap as many times as possible in a day and specially when you sneeze

Following these regular practices, you might be able to protect yourself as well as others from Swine Flu.