

## Swine Flu Update

The Bristol-Burlington Health District continues to closely monitor the swine flu situation. If critical or specific guidance or announcements becomes necessary, we will inform you via email and/or use our emergency notification system.

In the meantime, I would like to give you an update since my last communication yesterday. As of 11:00 a.m. today (April 28), the CDC has 64 laboratory confirmed cases of swine flu infection. There are no confirmed cases yet in Connecticut. However, the outbreak continues to grow in the United States and internationally. In response to the intensifying outbreak, the World Health Organization has raised the worldwide pandemic alert to Phase 4. This means that person-to-person spread of a new influenza virus is able to cause "community-level" outbreaks. This change in phases means that the likelihood of a pandemic has increased.

Please see below for additional information that was not included in the initial fact sheet.

**Infection Period:** Infected people may be able to infect others before they even know they are sick. The virus can be spread a day before any symptoms develop and up to 7 or more days after becoming sick. Children, especially younger children, and individuals who are severely ill or have persistent symptoms might be contagious for longer periods.

**Respiratory Protection:** It is not necessary for the general public to use face masks. If you have flu symptoms, however, and go in to see a doctor, you may be asked to wear a mask to keep you from spreading any virus when you cough or sneeze.

**Annual Flu Shot:** The vaccine available this year will most likely not protect against the swine flu. It is a new form of the virus that was not available when the current vaccines were produced.

**Flu Symptoms:** If you have symptoms of the flu (fever, cough, muscle aches) you should call your health care provider who will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed. If you become ill (particularly if you have flu like symptoms) you should not report to work/school until you have been cleared by your health care provider.

The Health District recommends you use the links below to remain informed of the most recent information issued by the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization.

<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>

[http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/whatsnew.htm?s\\_cid=tw\\_epr\\_68](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/whatsnew.htm?s_cid=tw_epr_68)

<http://www.who.int/en/>

L. Abrahamson, April 28, 2009 3:00 p.m.