

NORFOLK



ISLAND

Notice from the Norfolk Island Hospital

Influenza A/H1N1 (“Swine fever”)

As most are aware, there is an outbreak of influenza A/H1N1 in Mexico with some reports from the United States and other countries. Influenza A/H1N1 is a contagious respiratory disease and symptoms are similar to that of the regular flu including fever, cough, sore throat, aching body, headache, chills, fatigue, diarrhoea and vomiting.

This flu is spread in the same way as seasonal flu, from person to person through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. It is possible to become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching the mouth or nose. There is no evidence that there is a risk of eating well cooked pork or pork products.

There is no vaccine currently available to protect against Influenza A/H1N1. The best ways to prevent catching the virus include avoiding contact with people who are ill, trying not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with the virus, staying in good general health and being physically active, getting lots of sleep, reducing stress, drinking lots of fluids and eating nutritious food. It is also important to limit the spread of germs by washing your hands, covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throwing the used tissue away as well as avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

There is no restriction of travel, however, if you have travelled from a swine flu area, especially Mexico and the United States within the last 7 days and have symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has traveled and has the symptoms it is important to seek medical attention promptly. All incoming passengers to Norfolk Island are being advised to telephone the Norfolk Island Hospital on 22091 if they display any flu like symptoms. Attention should be sought as soon as possible as the medications to treat the flu are best commenced within 3 days after the onset of symptoms. The Norfolk Island Hospital has stocks of Tamiflu for treating this flu, however, this will only be prescribed if you have flu like symptoms.

A working group with members across the Norfolk Island Government, the Administrators office, Norfolk Island Administration, the Hospital, Customs and Quarantine has been established to monitor the situation.

For information regarding this Influenza outbreak, the following websites can be accessed:

www.flupandemic.gov.au and www.healthemergency.gov.au.

David McCowan
Director

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