

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adirondack Bank Building, 5th Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
ONEIDA COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DANIEL W. GILMORE, PH.D.
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SUPERVISOR-IN-CHARGE

ADMINISTRATION

Phone: (315) 798-6400 ☎ Fax: (315) 266-6138



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For Immediate Release

Contact: Patrice Bogan, N.P., Director of Clinical Services
798-5747

Lab Confirms County's First H1N1(Swine) Case

Test results from the New York State Wadsworth Laboratory has confirmed the H1N1 influenza (Swine flu) virus in a patient in Oneida County. These results mark the first local finding for H1N1 influenza since the strain first surfaced in Mexico more than two months ago and quickly spread to more than 40 countries.

"Since the swine flu has surfaced, there have been more than thirty counties, including neighboring Onondaga and Madison, with previously reported cases," said Dan Gilmore, Acting Director of the Oneida County Health Department. Gilmore added, *"In this particular case the adolescent patient has already fully recovered and has resumed normal activities."*

Health department officials stress that in the majority of cases, the H1N1 virus produces symptoms not unlike seasonal influenza, and in most cases where a more serious illness and outcome resulted, the patients had underlying serious medical conditions. Those at greatest risk for complications include:

- People over 65, under the age of 5 and pregnant women
- People with asthma, emphysema or other chronic diseases
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic heart, kidney, liver or blood disorders

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr. has been closely monitoring the situation through the Health Department and urges County residents to follow health officials recommendations in order to limit the spread of influenza including:

- Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough. If you don't have a tissue use your forearm – never your hand!
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Avoid contact with people exhibiting symptoms of respiratory illness.
- Stay home if you are sick with a cough, sore throat, sneezing, or fever over 100 degrees F. Remain home for 7 days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours in order to keep from spreading the virus.

Picente says Oneida County residents should not be alarmed by the report of swine flu in our community but cautions everyone to be aware of how best to avoid the illness. *“By following some simple common sense practices, we can keep ourselves, our families and our community healthy,”* Picente said.

He also urged that anyone with mild to moderate flu-like symptoms recover at home and avoid crowding hospital emergency departments.

Residents with underlying medical conditions who experience flu-like symptoms should contact their primary care provider, who may prescribe anti-viral medication for a patient without confirming the H1N1 virus. Taken within the first day or two after the onset of symptoms these drugs can effectively reduce flu symptoms and complications.

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