



Swine Flu

Patient Information

Swine Flu is the common name that has been given to a new strain of influenza. Because it is a new type of flu virus, people have little, if any, resistance to it. This means it has been able to spread around the globe rapidly, becoming a pandemic.

Catch it, bin it, kill it

We all need to be cautious about Swine Flu and help to prevent its spread. However, there is no need to panic: flu pandemics are natural events that occur from time to time and in the majority of cases, the Swine Flu virus has proved relatively mild. The key to preventing the virus spreading is good respiratory and hand hygiene: catch your sneeze in a tissue, place it quickly in a bin and wash your hands and surfaces regularly to kill the virus.

Symptoms

If you have any of the following symptoms, you must follow the advice given, to help yourself get better whilst minimising the risk of passing the virus on to other people.

Typical symptoms are:

- Sudden fever (a high body temperature of over 38°C or 100.4°F); and
- Sudden cough.

Other symptoms may include:

- Headache;
- Tiredness;
- Chills;
- Aching muscles and limb or joint pain;
- Diarrhoea or stomach upset;
- Sore throat;
- Runny nose;
- Sneezing; and
- Loss of appetite.

What to do

Swine Flu should be treated the same way as any other flu. We advise that your first line of treatment should be to:

- Drink plenty of fluids;
- Take Paracetamol and Ibuprofen;
- Get plenty of rest;
- Keep warm;
- Isolate yourself for 5-7 days – you should **avoid coming into the surgery** to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. If you need medical assistance, please telephone us instead.

Tamiflu

The Government has been recommending the anti-viral tablet Tamiflu. However it has not informed the General Public of the side effects of taking this medication, which include:

- Nausea;
- Vomiting;
- Abdominal Pain;
- Diarrhoea;
- Conjunctivitis;
- Rash; and
- Visual Disturbances.

At best, the Tamiflu can reduce your symptoms by one day but you can only have the anti-viral once. This is why we recommended self-medicating as the first step.

Getting further information

For further information:

- Call the national Swine Flu helpline: 0800 1 513 513
- Visit: www.settvalley.co.uk/swineflu or www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu

Important points to remember

CONTROL the spread of the virus by:

- practising good hand and respiratory hygiene: catch it, bin it, kill it; and
- staying away from the surgery if you have Swine Flu symptoms – telephone us if you need advice.

TREAT the symptoms of Swine Flu as any other flu.

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