

naturopathic essentials

HEALTH CENTRE

General Family Practice - Dermatology - Pain Management Care



NATUROPATHIC NEWSLETTER

Swine Influenza Virus (Swine Flu, SIV)
[CAND Patient Handout]

Background



Swine influenza virus (referred to as SIV) refers to influenza cases that are caused by Orthomyxoviruses endemic to pig populations. Swine flu infects people every year and is found typically in people who have been in contact with pigs, although there have been cases of person-to-person transmission. There is no research that can predict who is at risk and who is not. What the history of previous Influenza pandemics has indicated is that patients who had the greatest mortality were those whose immune system over-reacted after the initial Influenza virus infection.

Signs and Symptoms

Following are the signs and symptoms most commonly associated with SIV:

- Symptoms are similar to those of regular human flu and include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, disorientation, chills and fatigue

Some people have also reported:

- Stiffness of the joints, diarrhea and vomiting

In children emergency warning signs requiring urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Lack of thirst resulting in not drinking enough fluids
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and a worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults, emergency warning signs requiring urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

How does SIV spread?

- Spread of SIV happens mainly from person-to-person in the same way that seasonal flu spreads, i.e., through coughing or sneezing of people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.
- Infected people may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to seven or more days after becoming sick.

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"The **care** you want
the **health** you need"
- Dr. Ian Koo, ND

Telephone: (905) 290-0850

Naturopathic Preventive Strategies

The following strategies are beneficial in the prevention of diseases such as SIV:

Hygiene

- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash after using it.
- Cough or sneeze into sleeve or jacket of bent arm rather than into closed fist or open hand.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after a cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.

Avoid close contact with sick people

- Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through coughing or sneezing by infected people. Those infected should consider wearing a mask to prevent spread.
- If sick, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Lifestyle

- Ensure adequate rest

- Wash hands with soap frequently during the day
- Do deep breathing exercises
- Walk and do stretching exercises to boost the immune system (Note: Extreme aerobic exercises and weight training are best minimized if you have any of the above symptoms)
- Dry skin brushing and contrast showers are useful to support optimal lymphatic system function
- Remember that 'emotional' stress, fear and worry can depress the immune system
- Allow a mild to moderate fever. A fever of 1-3 degrees above normal core body temperature (37.5 degrees Celsius) has a profound effect on immune modulation and optimizes the healing response

If you or someone you know is experiencing a new/worse cough, shortness of breath, are feeling feverish, and/or have had shakes or chills in the last 24 hours, and have travelled within the last seven days to an infected area, or have been in contact with a sick person, contact a naturopathic doctor or another health care professional immediately.

Ask your naturopathic doctor what you can do to prevent and/or manage swine flu influenza virus.

Send your questions in to Dr. Koo, ND at questions@naturopathicessentials.com

Naturopathic Essentials Health Centre
1891 Rathburn Road East
Mississauga, ON, L4W 3Z3

T: (905) 290-0850

www.naturopathicessentials.com

Visit Dr. Koo's Blog for more health & wellness tips.

www.naturopathicessentials.blogspot.com

Dr. Ian Koo, ND is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor trained in general family medicine. He has a special interest in helping to improve the quality of life for those living with chronic conditions such as cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal disorders & dermatological conditions. Ian has also had advanced training in the areas of Chinese herbology, pain management and is certified to perform facial rejuvenation (cosmetic) acupuncture. Ian is one of the few naturopaths on the Canada Post's list of approved ND's providing care for chronic low back pain, rotator cuff tendonitis and anxiety.

* Naturopathic medicine is **covered** by virtually all **extended insurance plans**.
Patients not covered can claim a health care credit from their income taxes.