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ने उगाठुं उरनमे दी लेंड वै उं विरधुा करके इस नंघर उे डेन करे: 01932 723553

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# Swine Influenza:

## Information and advice for pregnant and new mothers

# Swine Influenza

## Information and advice for pregnant and new mothers

This leaflet is intended to give you additional information to that received from a health care professional.

### INTRODUCTION

Symptoms of swine influenza are similar to those of seasonal influenza and usually include a feverish illness (38°C or above) accompanied by one or more of the following symptoms: cough, sore throat, headache and muscle aches. Some people have reported vomiting and diarrhoea also. For most people this illness appears to be mild but is highly contagious and spreads from person to person

### WHO IS AT RISK?

Everyone is potentially at risk but the risk is greater if you have been in contact with other people who have been diagnosed as having probable swine flu, including school age children. It is important for you to monitor your health closely for seven days after any contacts. There is no need for you to isolate yourself from other people as long as you remain well but be cautious in densely populated gatherings where you have little control over personal contact.

### WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK I'M INFECTED?

Clinical information on the effects of swine flu in pregnant women is still being gathered and assessed. However, it is considered likely that the current swine flu virus will be similar to seasonal flu.

The information in this leaflet was correct at the time of printing but may be subject to change.

To help us to keep you informed we will post updates on the Trust website detailing changes to our service. Please check this regularly on:

<http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk/>

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### Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email [pals@asph.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@asph.nhs.uk). If you still remain concerned please contact our Complaints Manager on 01932 722612 or email [complaints@asph.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@asph.nhs.uk).

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Author: J Hickman and J Frohlich

Department: Maternity Services

Version: 3

Published: Jan 2011

Review: Jan 2013

and need to come into the Maternity Unit for a pregnancy related issue, please tell the receptionist and/or midwife as soon as possible. You will be asked to wear a mask, wash your hands and to wait in a separate area.

*In extreme circumstances* antenatal clinics may be stopped at GP's surgeries and at the hospital except for the most urgent care, ultrasound scans may be delayed and postnatal visits will also stop but we will set up a system of telephone visiting and advice so you will be contacted. We will also discharge you from hospital as soon as possible to reduce the risk of cross infection to you and your baby.

On discharge from hospital you will also be given an information pack to guide you in adapting to motherhood and caring for your baby.

**Below is a telephone number that you can use to contact us, this line will be manned by a midwife 24 hours a day:**

**01932 722835**

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Department of Health website: [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

**My GP's telephone number is: .....**

Most pregnant women who are diagnosed with swine flu will show the same symptoms as seasonal flu. If you have flu-like symptoms contact your GP or NHS Direct for advice. Close contact can be defined as being exposed to a probable or confirmed case within the previous seven days for longer than an hour and within the distance of one metre.

Stay at home and call either your own GP, NHS direct or the Maternity Triage (telephone numbers are on the back page of the hand-held maternity notes)

In most cases you will be well enough to remain at home. It is important you avoid contact with other people as much as possible to avoid transmission. Your household contacts should also monitor their health and follow the above advice if they get symptoms.

#### **SHOULD I COME TO THE HOSPITAL OR ANTENATAL CLINIC TO BE CHECKED?**

If you are experiencing respiratory symptoms such as a productive cough or shortness of breath) you should contact the Labour Ward to arrange an assessment. If your symptoms are mild, you should stay at home to reduce the risk of infection to other mothers and babies in the unit.

#### **WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF?**

The best thing you can do is to have the seasonal flu vaccine available from your own GP. You should also follow good hygiene practices. These will help slow the spread of the virus and will be the single most effective thing you could do. Avoid prolonged close contact with symptomatic people and wash your hands with

soap and hot water or a sanitizer gel often. If you experience symptoms make early contact with your GP or maternity services.

## **LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF**

If you develop symptoms you should follow standard respiratory and hand hygiene and ensure that:

- You avoid contact with other people as much as possible
- Drink plenty of fluids, rest and stay cool
- It is fine to take Paracetamol as directed on the box to control symptoms – do not exceed the stated dose. This will help bring down your temperature if you are feeling feverish
- Rest as much as possible
- You cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible. Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully then wash your hands- Catch it, Bin it, Kill it
- Maintain good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus from your hands to face or to other people
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product
- If you have other children make sure they follow this advice too

## **HOW IS FLU TREATED?**

Infection with the flu virus is treatable with the anti-viral drugs Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and Zanamivir (Relenza®). Tamiflu is given in tablet form and Relenza is usually administered in the form of a nasal spray that is inhaled. In severe cases, complications such as chest infections or pneumonia may need treatment with antibiotics. It is difficult to estimate the risk to babies should a mother develop swine flu in pregnancy and treatment will be assessed on a case by case basis.

## **SET UP A NETWORK OF 'FLU-FRIENDS'**

Flu-friends are neighbours, friends or relatives who can help you if you become ill. For example, they could collect medicines, food, milk, nappies or other supplies you might need so you don't have to go out yourself. You may have made arrangements such as this already to help you after the birth of your baby.

## **IN THE EVENT OF A FLU PANDEMIC**

If the country is affected severely by a flu pandemic we can anticipate there being disruption to everyday life and services, the NHS will no different.

Careful planning has been taking place to minimise this but it is inevitable that staff will also become ill. If this happens we will have to rethink how we deliver the services that we provide to you.

Due to the highly contagious nature of the virus the maternity staff will have to protect their own health so they are fit enough to care for you. They will wear masks, gowns and aprons when giving direct care to you. If you think you have symptoms of swine flu