

# Debenham Group Practice

## Swine Flu Advice

July 2009

There is a lot in the media about this new virus. Over the last few months much has been learned and the advice that follows is based upon current information published by authorities on the matter.

Firstly, **swine flu is NO more dangerous than the normal winter flu virus** – but is much more widely publicised!

The symptoms are like the winter flu –  
Having a **temperature of 38 degrees C or above**, as well as **two** or more symptoms from the following – headache, widespread aching limbs/joints, sore throat, runny nose, diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

We recommend treatment for people in 'at risk groups'. These are people who have a higher than average chance of getting complications. Those considered 'at risk' are people with lung disease (including asthma), heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, neurological disease, diabetes, reduced immunity, pregnant women, children under 5 years old and those over 65 years old.

The treatment does not get you better faster but it may prevent complications.

If you get symptoms like those above **AND** you are in an 'at risk' group, please contact the surgery for medical advice within 48 hours of the start of your symptoms. **Please do not come to the surgery** but telephone in the first instance to speak to one of the healthcare staff.

If you get the above symptoms but are **not** in an 'at risk' group you are less likely to get the complications of flu, and so treatment with antiviral drugs is likely to be less beneficial. You should stay at home and rest, drink plenty of fluids and take paracetamol or similar. You may return to your normal activities 1 week after your symptoms started.

You can reduce the risk of passing on and of catching flu by doing the following:

- Always cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
- When you can, use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Dispose of the tissue as soon as you can.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently.
- Clean hard surfaces such as door handles frequently
- If you have flu, stay off work for 7 days after the beginning of the illness.

For further information on swine flu, please see drop-down menu on left of homepage choosing 'announcements', for links to other useful websites