

## Dealing with Swine Flu

### Why in news?

\n\n

The Health Department has issued an alert on H1N1, which has been showing a slight increase in the State since the beginning of the year.

\n\n

### What is H1N1?

\n\n

\n

- H1N1 flu is also known as swine flu. It's called **swine flu** because in the past, the people who caught it had direct contact with pigs.

\n

- In 2009, H1N1 was spreading fast around the world, so the World Health Organization called it a **pandemic**.

\n

- When people who have it cough or sneeze, they spray tiny drops of the virus into the air.

\n

- If you come in contact with these drops, touch a surface (like a doorknob or sink) where the drops landed, or touch something an infected person has recently touched, you can catch H1N1 swine flu.

\n

- Its symptoms are pretty much the same as seasonal flu. They can include - Cough, Fever, Sore throat, Stuffy or runny nose, Body aches, Headache, Chills and Fatigue.

\n

\n\n

### What is its geographical spread?

\n\n

\n

- The statistics of the **Integrated Disease Surveillance Project** of the Health Department shows that there have been 233 confirmed cases of

H1N1 this year till date, including 16 deaths.

\n

- H1N1 has been on the rise in **all south Indian States** this year and doctors should necessarily follow the ABC guidelines and standard treatment protocols for H1N1 when treating patients with cold and fever.

\n

\n\n

### **What are ABC guidelines?**

\n\n

\n

- The Centre has come up with exhaustive guidelines for the States to follow for combating the H1N1 outbreak.

\n

- In **Category A** will be those who do not require testing for H1N1. Patients with mild fever, cough and sore throat, body ache, headache, nausea and diarrhoea will be put in Category A and can be monitored for 24-48 hours.

\n

- These patients will be advised to stay at home and not mingle with the others. They will not need testing for H1N1 and no treatment with **Oseltamivir**.

\n

- In **Category B** will be those who have all the symptoms mentioned in Category A, but have high-grade fever and are in the high-risk category; they will need treatment with Oseltamivir and will have to be confined at home.

\n

- High-risk category includes children with mild illness, pregnant women, persons over 65, patients with lung, liver, heart, kidney, blood or neurological diseases or have been on long-term cortisone therapy.

\n

- In **Category C** will be those who have all the signs and symptoms of Category A and B and depending on their health condition will have to be hospitalised.

\n

\n\n

### **What is the way ahead?**

\n\n

\n

- The public should take care to seek professional care if mild influenza, cough, cold with fever or respiratory distress do not subside in a reasonable

time.

\n

- Pregnant women, children, elderly, and those with respiratory issues; co-morbidities such as diabetes, renal diseases, hypertension and cardiac issues; and immune-compromised conditions such as cancer or HIV should take special care as H1N1 has been known to cause high mortality among these groups.

\n

- People with flu should stay home away from crowded public places.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: The Hindu**

\n

