

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

