

The swine flu



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Currently, there has been an international concern and fear about the disease “The Swine” or Swine Flu. The main question that all the experts were worried about was whether the swine flu is an epidemic or a pandemic. An epidemic is defined as an outbreak of a contagious disease that can be widely spread and affects lots of people at the same time. A pandemic is a disease that spreads not only in a local region but, worldwide. On April 2009 the swine flu did not meet the definition of a pandemic, however, the WHO (World Health Organization) declared that the swine flu is a pandemic by the mid of June 2009. This is where the nightmare started. The swine flu was given that nickname due to the transfer of the virus from pigs to human. “The Swine” is considered as a type of an influenza disease. Influenza is a disease that people usually catch at least once in their lifetime. The influenza or the flu was a deadly disease in the past, but now there are the proper vaccinations and medications to fight it. Swine Flu is an extremely contagious disease and it easily spreads from one person to another whether it was through exhaled air, sneezes, coughs, or even shaking hands with an infected person or a person who has touched an infected object. When doctors or experts talk about influenza they argue that it’s not a serious disease, but on the other hand it affects the body’s immunity and makes it vulnerable to bacterial and viral attack. It’s believed that the H1N1 is transferred the same way the regular influenza is. Newspapers, magazines, and TV newscasters are constantly babbling about the swine flu, and it has taken the lead on every front page. The question here is: is swine flu worth all the attention it’s getting on the media, on the street posts and on the TV channels? Or is it just as so called a “propaganda” and another way for a money grab? The answer can be explained in many ways.

To start off, the swine flu is caused by an influenza of the classification A. Influenza A has the subtypes that include viruses H1N1, H1N2, H2N3, H3N1, and H3N2. The viral strain H1N1 is the virus that spread in the flu pandemic of 2009. In the United States it is declared that in ever one thousand people, forty need direct access to the hospital and one person dies. The World Health of Organization stated at July-17-2009 that there have been 89, 921 cases and 382 deaths worldwide. Deaths and cases of the swine flu are mainly spotted in the US. Through these statistics it is proved that the swine flu is a dangerous case mainly in the United States and not in other countries.

The incubation period (the time between the illness and appearance of symptoms) for the swine flu as claimed by the HPA (Health Protection Agency) lies between two and five days. A person suffering from “ The Swine” will experience at least three of the following symptoms: coughing and sneezing, headache, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, aching muscles, and diarrhea or vomiting. When a person is suffering from those symptoms he/she is in a highly contagious state; he/she can easily pass on the virus to others. Usually, it takes around a week for the person to pull through, and once the symptoms are gone the person is no longer infectious to others around him.

The swine flu is a highly contagious disease as declared by the Health Protection Agency (HPA). It can pass easily from one person to another. Scientifically speaking, “ The Swine” is just like the other flu diseases; it is an airborne disease; the virus spreads from an infected person’s nose or mouth when he coughs or sneezes, through the air droplets.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-swine-flu/>

Those who are having swine flu sometimes cough without covering their mouth, or washing their hands afterwards. Thus, the virus easily spreads on the object's surfaces that the infected person touches which include: door handles, keyboards, mobiles, remote controllers, etc... It is believed that a virus survives on a hard surface for about 24 hours and on a soft surface for 20 minutes only. If an uninfected person touches these surfaces within these timings, he/she will catch the virus simply by touching their face.

There are some certain cases that put people under a higher risk of catching the swine flu. Firstly, the swine flu seems to be of a great danger to pregnant women. Pregnant women should avoid catching the swine flu and this is by keeping away from congested areas like airports and cinemas. If they are living with someone who has the swine flu, they should be given Relenza (to a type of medication to be discussed shortly). Relenza should be taken through an inhaler rather than a tablet to accumulate in the pregnant women's lungs and throats and not in the blood, this way, their baby won't be affected.

Secondly, people with certain health conditions and chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes are put in jeopardy with the swine flu dangers as the H1N1 virus targets a vulnerable immune system. Those suffering from a chronic health condition are obliged to be immunized with both, the seasonal flu vaccine and the H1N1 swine flu vaccine. They should keep a record of the medications that they are receiving for their chronic disease, and once they are in doubt of having the swine flu, they should keep on using these medications unless their personal health care supervisor says otherwise.

Experts and researchers tried to come up with a lot of solutions and treatments to the nightmare, the swine flu. There are two vaccines made for "The Swine". The first vaccination is called "Pandemrix" and the second is called "Celvapan". Both of these inoculations have been licensed and legally distributed. The Celvapan vaccine is taken in two doses, three weeks apart. At the time being, vaccinations are available only in the US and Europe since developing countries cannot afford to produce their own vaccines. An important thing to take into account is to whom "The Swine" can be deadly and very dangerous to. The Public Health Agency of Canada claimed that mainly, people who are aged fewer than 65 years are supposed to take the vaccination since the swine virus is more likely to affect nonelderly people because those who are older than 65 years seem to have natural immunity for swine flu. Moreover, pregnant women should be immunized straight away as "The Swine" seems to target pregnant women, it is claimed the higher risks of the swine flu occur at the late stages of pregnancy (the last three months of pregnancy), and they are advised to take the Pandemrix vaccine as it produces a sufficient amount of protection in your body after a single dose. In addition, children (aged between six months and five years) are the best objective for swine flu, but, babies under the age of six can't take the vaccine as it will show no response for adequate protection. A person who lives with someone who has a weak immune system as a result of being infected with a disease such as cancer or aids is strongly advised take the vaccination as he/she is more prone to "The Swine" attack.

However, there are some people, but quite a few who are prohibited to take the swine flu vaccine. Firstly, the vaccine should not be given whatsoever to

someone who had a brutal allergic reaction to the first dose of the vaccination. Secondly, the Pandemrix vaccine is prepared in hen's eggs so those who have egg allergies or had breathing problems when taking egg products should not take the vaccine. Nevertheless, the Celvapan virus is not prepared in hen's eggs therefore people who have egg allergies are obliged to take this vaccination.

Conversely, there are some symptoms to the swine flu vaccinations. It is declared that there are no deaths or serious events that occurred from the vaccination. Side effects that might result after a swine flu immunization include: Tenderness, pain, redness, hardening of the skin, swelling and bruising. In addition, a vaccinated person might suffer from whole-body side effects that involve: Severe headaches, muscle pain, chills, queasiness, fever, and vomiting. However, experts came up with "Adjuvant" which is a substance added to a vaccine to improve its performance and make it more efficient in supporting the body in strong immune response.

In addition, "Tamiflu" and "Relenza" are two major antiviral medications to suppress the effects of the swine flu, but not cure it completely. When a virus enters your body, it controls and manipulates healthy cells and orders them to make copies of themselves. Relenza acts on stopping the action of making copies of the virus from infected cells in the lungs. As a result, the process of spreading the virus in the body is slowed down and thus lessening the symptoms. The earlier you start taking Relenza (within 48 hours since the symptoms are felt in adults) the better it functions in protecting your body against "The Swine". Tamiflu works the same way Relenza does in the body, although, Relenza concentrates on lessening the flu symptoms by one

<https://assignbuster.com/the-swine-flu/>

and a half days on average, while Tamiflu reduces the flu symptoms by up to two days on average. The Chamomile drink as believed by the Chinese has a similar composition to the Tamiflu antiviral medication but on the other hand has an even better effect and at a lower price.

People with white masks are spotted everywhere lately, certainly in airports and other congested areas. Health officials say that facemasks can mislead people into thinking that they're effective in protection against the swine flu. In reality, facemasks are only effective when they are worn in a correct manner and when they are changed on regular basis because facemasks can get damped from breathing, and thus more likely to catch viruses. People are depending a lot on facemasks that they're getting less concerned with washing their hands more often.

Moreover, the vaccination, antiviral medications are not the only ways to treat the swine flu or suppress its effects, there are several basic day-to-day things that people are advised to take for the sake of avoiding the swine flu as much as possible, these things involve: Washing your hands constantly, because you might have touched a contaminated surface, therefore keeping the hands clean will help you avoid the swine flu (remember to keep a hand sanitizer with you wherever you may go). Cough and sneeze in a manner to cover your mouth, this way you will not spread the virus to other uninfected people. Dispose used and dirty tissues. Clean the hard surfaces such as door handles more often and by using a suitable, and effective cleaning product. Avoid crowds and public transportations; this is the foremost important tasks to do if you want to avoid swine flu as it lessens the chance of being so close to someone and getting the swine flu as a result of that. If you can't avoid a <https://assignbuster.com/the-swine-flu/>

certain crowd try to follow the 6-foot-rule ; try to stand 6 feet away from a person who is coughing or sneezing. Visit your doctor straight away if you are experiencing any swine flu symptoms and they will give you the proper medications, antivirals and vaccinations specifically for your case.

We should not waste our time in sitting back and listening to the news and media talking about how swine flu is very dangerous, risky and hopeless. Instead, we should put in more of this effort in developing natural immunity against the swine flu. We should have a healthier diet which majorly contains vitamins. Vitamins A and D like cod liver oil tends to give a great protection against such an infection. Moreover, vitamin c obtained from citrus drinks is a must for maintaining natural immunity

If you catch the swine flu, do not panic! “ Contain the illness”; take a good care of yourself, pamper yourself more often, drink plenty of water and other fluids, take a plenty of rest. Try coughing into the elbow of your hand to avoid passing your virus to others through hand shaking. Get rid off your dirty tissues yourself; don’t let someone else do it for you!

The media always claims that we live in an unsafe world and anything (like the swine flu) that throws us out of control invites pathogens (viruses and bacteria) to take over our body cells. But how shall we react depends on our logic and common sense not on the media’s talk. The media’s only main concern is to make a scary situation even worse than it really is. There are so many incidents that took place and proved the media wrong about how bad the swine flu is.

Firstly, out of 2, 000, 000 people in the pilgrimage this year only 350 died and off course not all died out of “ The Swine”

Secondly, death cases are very rare and statistics show that worldwide every 1 in 4000 people die of swine flu.

As a conclusion, I think that the swine flu is not as bad as the media says it is. Most companies are exaggerating about the fact that the swine flu is very dangerous just for the sake of money grab. People are not supposed to be tricked into believing that it's dangerous because, by common sense, the symptoms are very clear and significant and once they are experiencing some of the symptoms all they are left to do is visit a health care professional, take the proper medications, antivirals, and try their best to minimize their contact with others. On the other hand, people should be aware of the fact that the swine flu is just like the regular seasonal influenza, and it can be simply avoided by maintaing good hygiene like washing their hands more often, and carrying a hand sanitizer or an alcohol based hand wash everywhere they go. People are wasting a lot of effort in thinking of the dangerous consequences of the swine flu; they should instead spend more time on trying to work on developing natural immunity against it. It is believed that those who catch the swine flu feel very dreadful when experiencing its symptoms, but most of them end up recovering with no problems and sometimes even without the aid of medical treatments.

Bibliography:

- Jamieson D et al. (2009). H1N1 2009 Influenza virus infection during pregnancy in the USA. Lancet 2009; 374: 451-458.

- Neusdat, R. And Fineberg, H. (December 1977). The Swine Flu Affair. The United States: McGraw companies.
- McNeil Jr., Donald G. (2009-04-26). “ Flu Outbreak Raises a Set of Questions”. The New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/27/health/27questions.html>.
- Parkash, S. (01 Jan 2010). Swine flu diagnosis and treatment. United Kingdom: Daya publishing house.