

## **NEWS RELEASE**



For Immediate Release

### **Medicine Shoppe Pharmacists Answer Common Swine Flu Questions**

*Local pharmacists stress the importance of understanding the disease and seeking physician treatment at the first signs of flu symptoms*

**April 30, 2009** – This week, the reports of swine flu is causing great anxiety in communities across the United States and the world. As reports and updates on the disease’s progress are hitting the media, consumers are seeking out any available information to quickly understand the swine flu’s threat, how to prevent infection, and how it’s treated. As such, there’s a lot of confusion and misinformation about the disease.

“The swine flu is a serious threat, and it’s important for consumers to inform themselves and understand the threat and prevention of swine flu, whether or not they are in an area with confirmed or suspected cases,” said Keith Cook, vice president of clinical pharmacy at Medicine Shoppe International. “Your pharmacist is a great resource to start to understand the disease, as well as to help determine if you need to seek further medical advice or treatment. However, if you or a loved one experience any flu symptoms, contact your physician immediately.”

To help consumers better understand the threat, prevention and treatment of swine flu, Medicine Shoppe pharmacists are answering some of the most common questions their customers are asking:

- **What is the difference between swine flu and the well-known seasonal flu?**  
The symptoms of the swine flu and seasonal flu are very similar. Swine flu symptoms are similar to those of the seasonal flu, including fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, and coughing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), some who have been infected with the swine flu also reported having a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- **How does someone become infected with swine flu?**  
Swine influenza is a respiratory disease of pigs. Human infection happens with most cases occurring when patients have direct contact with infected pigs. Human-to-human transmission of the swine flu occurs similar to the way the human seasonal flu virus is transmitted through coughing, sneezing and coming in contact with a person or object with the virus. A person cannot become infected by eating pork or pork products.
- **Are there ways I can protect myself from swine flu?**  
Yes. While there is no vaccine to prevent infection of the swine flu, the CDC is recommending avoiding close contact with people that are sick as much as possible, frequently wash your hands and disinfect shared household objects such as faucets and doorknobs.
- **Will the seasonal flu shot protect me from the swine flu?**  
No, this season’s flu shot will not protect someone from contracting swine flu. There is no human vaccine currently available that is specifically for swine flu. The CDC is recommending two prescription antivirals, Tamiflu or Relenza, to help treat and/or prevent swine flu. These medicines should be taken as soon as possible after illness onset.

- **When should I seek professional advice or treatment? Who should I contact for information?**  
If you or someone in your family is experiencing flu symptoms, contact your physician immediately to determine the best course of action. Waiting to receive treatment can have serious side effects, as well as promote the spread of the virus to others.

“It’s important to always remember to take the right action to prevent contracting any virus, including frequent hand washing and staying up-to-date on immunizations,” said Cook. “For any international travel, you should always talk with your pharmacist or physician about needed vaccines before traveling to any country.”

For more information about swine flu, please visit the CDC’s Web site at [www.cdc.gov/swineflu](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu).

### **About Medicine Shoppe International**

Medicine Shoppe International, Inc. [www.medicineshoppe.com](http://www.medicineshoppe.com), a Cardinal Health Company, is one of the largest franchisors of independent community pharmacies in the U.S. In 2003, Medicine Shoppe International acquired Medicap Pharmacies Incorporated [www.medicap.com](http://www.medicap.com), which franchises independent community pharmacies in the U.S. under the trade name Medicap Pharmacy®. Medicine Shoppe® and Medicap Pharmacy® locations are distinguished for their commitment to providing expert, personalized health care. There are approximately 800 domestic Medicine Shoppe pharmacies and Medicap Pharmacy locations and approximately 400 Medicine Shoppe pharmacies in five other countries.

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