



County of Bucks



EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

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H1N1 INFLUENZA A FACT SHEET FOR EMS

1. Definitions

- a. **Acute febrile respiratory illness**: fever plus one or more of the following: nasal congestion/ rhinorrhea, sore throat, or cough).
- b. **Respiratory Droplet Precautions**: intended to prevent transmission of pathogens spread through close respiratory or mucous membrane contact with respiratory secretions such as influenza. Includes use of eye protection and mask.
- c. **Standard Precautions**: group of infection prevention practices that apply to all patients, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status, in any setting in which healthcare is delivered. These include: hand hygiene; use of gloves, gown, mask, eye protection, or face shield, depending on the anticipated exposure.
- d. **Swine Influenza**: Influenza A virus, subtype H1N1 derived from several strains of influenza including swine influenza virus and capable of human to human transmission.

2. Personal Protective Equipment

- a. Assess patient while staying at least 6 ft away from patient and bystanders with symptoms and exercise appropriate routine respiratory droplet precautions (cough etiquette, hand hygiene, spatial separation) while assessing all patients.
- b. For case of suspected H1N1 influenza – don fit-tested** disposable N95 respirator and eye protection (e.g., goggles; eye shield), disposable non-sterile gloves, and gown, when coming into close contact with the patient and or performing aerosolizing procedures (intubation, suctioning, etc) on a patient.
 - a) EMS Services are reminded that they are responsible for assuring fit testing of N-95 respirators as per the guidelines set forth by OSHA 29 CFR-1910.134 – Respiratory Protection. **
- c. For cases of acute febrile respiratory illness in which H1N1 influenza is not suspected place a standard surgical mask on the patient, if tolerated. If not tolerated, EMS personnel may wear a standard surgical mask. Use good respiratory hygiene and non-sterile gloves for contact with patient or contaminated surfaces.

3. Pre-arrival

- a. The Bucks County Radio Room will attempt to determine if a patient requesting EMS has signs / symptoms consistent with an acute febrile respiratory illness. The dispatcher will notify responding units “*the patient has flu like symptoms.*” This should clue in EMS personnel to maintain respiratory droplet precautions. **EMS providers are reminded to always employ Universal Precautions when providing care to patients.**

4. Patient Transportation / Unit Decontamination

- a. Encourage patient compartment vehicle airflow/ ventilation
- b. Notify receiving facility prior to arrival when transporting a patient with an acute febrile respiratory illness.

References

- 1) [Draft Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Suspected H1N1 Influenza A Protocol](#)
- 2) www.pandemicflu.gov
- 3) www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu
- 4) www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_isolation

- c. After patient care transferred, decontaminate the vehicle following “Interim Guidance for Cleaning Emergency Medical Service Transport Vehicles during an Influenza Pandemic”
http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/healthcare/cleaning_ems.html.

References

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