



Safety Bulletin 121

Swine flu – general advice for employers

Employers and employees should practice good personal hygiene measures – use a disposable tissue to control coughs/sneezes, dispose of it appropriately and wash your hands before eating, drinking etc. In addition you should:

- ✚ Advise your staff to stay at home if they are sick with flu-like symptoms.
- ✚ Send home any employees who are displaying flu-like signs/symptoms

Use of face masks

The number of people in public places who are displaying symptoms is likely to be limited. Therefore it should not be necessary for workers to wear masks routinely when in contact with the general public.

However, there may be some situations when it will be advisable for a worker to wear a mask. Such a situation will depend on the nature of the work and where it is to be carried out.

Employers should carry out a risk assessment and, amongst other things, gauge:

- ✚ If workers are likely to encounter members of the public who are displaying symptoms, for example, in a healthcare setting it is highly likely that contact with the public (patients) will include persons who have symptoms of influenza;
- ✚ Where contact with people displaying symptoms is likely, whether any measures can be taken to minimise contact;
- ✚ The duration and frequency of contact with members of the public.

If you require any further information, clarification or assistance with the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us;

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*Source – The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
www.hse.gov.uk*