



**For public distribution
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EOC SITUATION REPORT #9 Influenza A/H1N1

Summary

- The situation continues to evolve, 16 countries have officially reported 677 confirmed cases of the new Influenza A/H1N1.
- Outside the Americas, the following countries have reported laboratory confirmed cases with no deaths: Austria (1), China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (1), Denmark (1), France (2), Germany (6), Israel (3), Netherlands (1), New Zealand (4), Republic of Korea (1), Spain (13), Switzerland (1) and the United Kingdom (15).
- Sustained human-to-human transmission has remained only in Mexico and USA, therefore phase 5 continues to be in effect.
- The World Health Assembly (WHA) is scheduled in Geneva as planned (18-27 May 2009).
- As of today, WHO has decided to refer to the virus as Influenza A/H1N1.

Status of the Region

- Mexico: 397 confirmed cases, including 16 deaths. There has been an increase in total confirmed cases in Mexico mostly due to testing of backlogged cases. At the same time, the number of probable cases appears to be decreasing in the Mexico City area.
- The United States: 160 confirmed cases, including 1 death.
- Canada: 70 confirmed cases; some with recent travel history to Mexico.
- Costa Rica: 1 confirmed case with recent travel history to Mexico.
- A daily epidemiological report is posted on the [PAHO website](#)¹; updated epidemiological reports from Mexico can be found on the [Dirección General de Epidemiología](#)².

No rationale for travel restrictions

- WHO/PAHO is not recommending travel restrictions related to the outbreak of the Influenza A/H1N1 virus. Limiting travel and imposing travel restrictions would have very little effect on stopping the spread of the virus.
- Cases of influenza A/H1N1 have already been confirmed in many parts of the world. The focus now is on minimizing the impact of the virus and providing patients with appropriate medical care.
- Although identifying the signs and symptoms of influenza in travelers can be an effective monitoring measure, it is not effective in reducing the spread of influenza as the virus can be transmitted from person-to-person before the onset of symptoms.

¹ http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1239&Itemid=1091

² <http://www.dgepi.salud.gob.mx/>

- Travelers can protect themselves and others by following simple recommendations aimed at preventing the spread of infection.
- Individuals who are ill should delay travel plans, and returning travelers who fall ill should seek appropriate medical care. These recommendations are prudent measures which can limit the spread of many communicable diseases, not only Influenza A/H1N1.

Overall Recommendations

- Continue enhanced surveillance. PAHO has published guidelines for the enhancement of surveillance activities (see PAHO’s website).
- National Influenza Centers (NIC) in Latin American and Caribbean countries (LAC) should submit all positive specimens of influenza A that cannot be sub-typed in country to the WHO Collaborating Center for Influenza (CDC of the United States).
- Continuation of seasonal influenza vaccination in all countries.
- There is no risk of infection from this virus from consumption of pork and pork products.
- Individuals are advised to wash hands thoroughly with soap and water on a regular basis and should seek medical attention if they develop any symptoms of influenza-like illness (ILI).

WHO Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Guidance 2009, Definition of Phases

<i>Phase 1</i>	No animal influenza virus circulating among animals has been reported to cause infection in humans.
<i>Phase 2</i>	An animal influenza virus circulating in domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans and is therefore considered a specific potential pandemic threat.
<i>Phase 3</i>	An animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.
<i>Phase 4</i>	Human-to-human transmission (H2H) of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to sustain community-level outbreaks has been verified.
<i>Phase 5</i>	The same identified virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in two or more countries in one WHO region.
<i>Phase 6</i>	In addition to the criteria defined in Phase 5, the same virus has caused sustained community level outbreaks in at least one other country in another WHO region.
<i>Post-peak period</i>	Levels of pandemic influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance have dropped below peak levels.
<i>Possible new wave</i>	Level of pandemic influenza activity in most countries with adequate surveillance rising again.
<i>Post-pandemic period</i>	Levels of influenza activity have returned to the levels seen for seasonal influenza in most countries with adequate surveillance.

Resources

- The PAHO website has been updated with the most frequently asked questions, and advices on the use of masks in community settings during influenza A/H1N1 outbreaks.
- The PAHO intranet now includes a frequently asked questions document prepared by the PAHO Medical Unit. It has also been updated with pandemic guidelines, a transcript from the PAHO/CAREC Elluminate Session, and a summary of preparedness activities.
- WHO [has published](#)³ today online instruction on how to obtain CDC real-time RT-PCR kits for detection of influenza A/H1N1, a list of countries with PCR capacity in place to diagnose influenza A/H1N1 virus infection in humans, and a guide for pandemic influenza prevention and mitigation in low resource communities.
- The Regional Disaster Information Center (CRID) has released a new section with useful information for the public and health professionals compiled from different sources (Ministries of Health, Civil Defense and Protection, PAHO and others). See the [CRID website](#)⁴ for more information.

Conclusions

- All countries should refer to their National Influenza Pandemic Plans and implement the steps outlined in them for a Phase 5 alert.

For more information

- [Alerta preventiva por brote de influenza](#)⁵ (Secretaría de Salud de México).
- [Human Influenza Investigation](#)⁶ (CDC).
- [Occupational Health Issues associated with influenza A/H1N1](#)⁷.
- [Information on Influenza](#)⁸ (Public Health Agency of Canada).
- [PAHO Influenza website](#)⁹.
- [World Health Organization](#)¹⁰.

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³ <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/guidance/en/index.html>

⁴ <http://www.crid.or.cr/crid/index.shtml>

⁵ http://portal.salud.gob.mx/contenidos/noticias/influenza/alerta_influenza.html

⁶ <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>

⁷ <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/swineflu/>

⁸ <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/index-eng.php>

⁹ http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=805&Itemid=569

¹⁰ <http://www.who.int>