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## Swine Flu Advisory Memo to Districts, Affiliates and Members

The Swine Flu (influenza A (H1N1)) continues to spread throughout the world and New Zealand with more than 70 cases now confirmed on our shores, and with confirmed cases of Swine Flu being passed from person to person.

Deputy Director of Public Health Dr Darren Hunt says “According to our experience in New Zealand and confirmed by the World Health Organization, for most people this flu is mild and they recover quickly at home without having to visit their doctor”.

However, everyone in New Zealand has a responsibility to ensure we take all steps possible to minimise the spread of influenza A (H1N1) (Swine Flu).

### Identify the Symptoms

The symptoms of Swine Flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and can include **fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.**

### Protect Yourself, Your Family, Friends and Clubmates from Getting the Swine Flu

#### ➤ Try to avoid close contact with people you know to be sick

Players who are showing any signs of the flu as stated above should not participate in training sessions, or games.

All people including players, parents, supporters, coaching and club staff with symptoms of the flu should not be present in changing rooms or club rooms.



## ➤ **Maintain good hygiene**

Wash your hands often with soap and water and dry them thoroughly. Alcohol-based hand cleaners or sanitizers are also effective.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth as germs spread this way.

Do not share water (e.g. same bottles or drinking cups).

Do not share food (e.g. bite of a friend's pie or chips etc)

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, then immediately dispose of the tissue in a plastic bag.

## **If You or Someone You Know Gets Ill**

Ring ahead to let your GP know you have influenza-like symptoms, or call Healthline on **0800-611-116**.

Stay home for the duration of your symptoms (**around seven days, or a day after symptoms appear to be gone**) to prevent spreading the virus to others.

## **The world health organisation also suggests that if you have influenza you should:**

- Rest and take plenty of fluids;
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing and, if using tissues, make sure you dispose of them carefully. Clean your hands immediately after with soap and water or cleanse them with an alcohol-based hand rub;
- If you do not have a tissue close by when you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth as much as possible with the crook of your elbow;
- If you have masks, these can be used to help contain the spread of droplets when you are around others, but be sure to use the mask correctly;
- Inform family and friends about your illness and try to avoid close contact with other people.

**Club Responsibilities:**

Ensure players, coaching staff, administrators, supporters etc, that show signs of having the flu are asked to remain at home and not come to the clubrooms or grounds for trainings, games or meetings etc.

Be aware of any club members returning from international travel – if they have any symptoms of the flu, they must not come to the club until at least a day after being symptom free.

**Team Responsibilities:**

Anyone demonstrating signs of the flu must not be allowed to continue to participate in training or games. Ensure they go home to rest.

Ensure water bottle sharing is kept to a minimum, where sharing of water bottles occurs make sure there is a “squirt don’t suck” policy.

**For All:**

**The Ministry of Health ( [www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz) ) will be issuing updates and guides – make sure you are keeping up to date with the latest developments.**

Details will also be provided in the press and on television.

Cancellations of public events (such as weekend sports) may become a part of the Ministry of Health’s action plans. If so, NZRL will follow the Ministry of Health’s directives and instruct its Districts to do the same.

Information and updates on cancellations and other Swine Flu related actions will be distributed via the usual channels and on the NZRL website.

If you have specific queries please do not hesitate to contact me at 09 517 3873 or [dain@nzrl.co.nz](mailto:dain@nzrl.co.nz)

Regards,



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