

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Specific Guidance #1

Establish Protocols and Procedures for Standard Barrier and Droplet Precautions for Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) April 23, 2009

Consistent with CDPH guidance, EMS workers providing care for patients with Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) should use appropriate standard barrier precautions and droplet precautions, based upon the circumstances of the case. EMS workers and providers should follow their usual responder infection control/protection procedures and patient care protocols based upon direction from the LEMSA medical director.

Situational Guidance

1. In the most common situation where EMS workers are providing care for patients with Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) who are not known contacts of a laboratory-confirmed swine flu case:
 - Absent specific patient care protocols locally for this situation, EMSA recommends standard barrier precautions for routine patient care plus droplet precautions (i.e., use of a surgical or procedure mask) for procedures that require close patient contact.
 - Standard barrier precautions include hand hygiene and the use of eye protection if splashing or spraying of blood or body fluids (including respiratory secretions) are anticipated.
 - Droplet precautions include all the standard barrier precautions plus the use of a surgical or procedure mask for procedures that require close contact.
2. In the event that an EMS worker is providing care for a laboratory-confirmed swine flu case, or an ill close contact of a laboratory-confirmed swine flu case, precautions should include:
 - Wear a fit-tested N95 respirator, disposable gloves, gown, and eye protection (face shield or goggles).
 - Before and after contact with the patient, clean hands thoroughly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel.

Ensure Minimum Personal Protective Equipment

EMS providers, both emergency and non-emergency, should ensure that they have the equipment and supplies readily available to meet any local requirements for Personal Protective Equipment and the EMSA #216 policy regarding minimum equipment for personal protective equipment.