

Mexican Flu/H1N1 virus

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has confirmed that the Mexican Flu has now moved into phase 6. This is the highest pandemic phase and means that there is direct transmission of the influenza virus from human to human in several regions in the world is now a fact. Up to now a few dozen people have been infected in The Netherlands with the Mexican flu. The WHO considers the overall global severity of the pandemic to be moderate.

What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?

The symptoms of novel H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever (above 38,5 degrees Celsius), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. A significant number of people who have been infected with this virus also have reported having diarrhea and vomiting. The virus is transmitted by inhaling infected droplets expelled by coughing or sneezing or by touching contaminated hands or surfaces

Infection can take place by inhaling the virus or via hand contact. Symptoms disappear generally within two to seven days and after recovery one is protected against the virus. When infected, the general practitioner can prescribe an anti-viral medication; the anti-viral medication can make the illness milder and make you feel better faster and reduces the contagiousness.

Process of the Mexican Flu

Information about the process of the Mexican Flu (H1N1) is not clear. Among the infected people in the United States and Canada and now also in The Netherlands, this virus does not seem to be different or more severe than the normal seasonal flu. Each year around 1000 people in The Netherlands die of the normal seasonal flu.

What measures can you take to prevent infection?

- Be alert to symptoms that can indicate infection with the Mexican flu and to people in your environment that may be infected
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people. If this is not possible, take sufficient hygienic measures
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective. Dry your hands with a paper towel or tissue and throw it away immediately after use
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. By touching something or shaking hands the virus can come onto your hands. By the hands the virus can get into your eyes, nose or mouth
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of the tissues after use.
- Keep informed about the latest news on the Mexican flu

Unfortunately you cannot prevent infection; you can however reduce the chance of infection if you take the above mentioned precautions on a daily basis.

Information for ISIS insured who are already abroad:

If you have the above mentioned flu symptoms, contact Gouda Assistance. For the correct telephone number we refer you to the header "In case of Emergency" at www.isis-insurance.com The employees of Gouda Assistance will advise you what to do. If you have taken out the option medical expenses, the costs of medical treatment after being infected, are covered under the ISIS travel insurance. Preventive costs (such as vaccinations and preventive quarantine) are not covered under travel insurance.

The costs of extra accommodation expenses and rearranged flights if you are placed in quarantine abroad and have to stay beyond your planned departure date, are covered under the Special ISIS Insurance provided you have contacted Gouda Assistance.

For the maximum covered amount we refer you to the policy conditions.

Information for travellers before going abroad:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/Reizen_en_Landen) provides travel advice to people living in The Netherlands planning to go abroad. If the Ministry advises against non-essential travel to or through a country where you planned to go to, you can contact your tour operator or travel agency. The tour operator can decide to cancel the tour and refund you the amount paid or to rebook you to another destination.

If you do decide to travel to a country with such a travel advice, the Special ISIS Travel Insurance will cover you if you take the usual precautions as long as you don't place yourself in situations where there is an increased risk of transmitting the disease. For example, travelling in the underground. In case of flu symptoms, always contact Gouda Assistance!

ISIS Cancellation Insurance

The ISIS Cancellation Insurance does not provide coverage in case of an advice against non-essential travel or in case you don't want to travel to a country because of the virus.

The ISIS Cancellation Insurance covers cancellation costs if you cannot travel on the planned departure date from the Netherlands because you are infected with the virus. You can file the claim by sending us a written notice from your treating doctor that you are not fit to travel on the planned departure date from the Netherlands.

Links

You can follow the developments about the Mexican flu at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

<http://www.who.int>

<http://www.postbus51.nl> (Dutch)

For travel advices of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/Reizen_en_Landen