

# Advice<sup>\*</sup>

## for passengers who have traveled on board ships together with persons ill with an acute respiratory illness

Dear passengers,

You have travelled on board a ship together with one or more passengers with symptoms consistent with an acute respiratory illness. Possibly these symptoms were caused by a novel influenza virus, which is passed between humans. It cannot be excluded that the affected persons have shed influenza virus during the journey. To prevent influenza illness in you, the port health authority, the ship doctor and the ship's command respectively, will explain to you appropriate measures.

**Please follow the recommendations of the port health authority, the ship doctor and the ship's command respectively.**

Your personal data and how you can be reached should have been recorded by the port health authority, the ship doctor and the ship's command respectively. If not, please make sure you leave it with the port health authority, the ship doctor and the ship's command respectively. You will be contacted by the public health service, should further measures be necessary.

This novel type of influenza virus can cause serious illness and has been associated with death. As long as this virus has not been found in Germany, German health authorities are trying to detect emerging cases early, and to prevent importation of the virus. For this we are relying on your cooperation. Typical signs are:

- **sudden onset of illness**
- **fever  $\geq 38$  °C or chills**
- **runny or stuffy nose**
- **sore throat**
- **cough or shortness of breath**
- **muscle or joint pains, headache**

**If you notice any of the above symptoms within the next 7 days:**

- Please seek medical attention as soon as possible, so you can be checked and possibly treated. Please inform your physician beforehand about your concern, such that the appropriate preparations can be made.
- Please keep this leaflet and hand it over to your physician.
- Please provide your physician with your journey details (tour operator, name of the ship, itinerary, date and time of arrival, place of departure, place of arrival, potential stop-overs). If you still have it, bring along your travel documents containing all these details.

For additional information, please see [www.rki.de](http://www.rki.de)

---

**The message on the back of this leaflet is intended for the physician you may be contacting.**

---

<sup>\*</sup> by the Robert Koch Institute, the Arbeitskreis der Küstenländer für Schiffshygiene and the See-Berufsgenossenschaft

## **Message for medical personnel contacted by this patient**

Dear doctor,

The patient contacting you has developed influenza-like symptoms after a ship passage to Germany (but may since have continued travel to another country). In the country of this patient's departure, infections with a novel type of influenza virus (swine flu) have been diagnosed.

This leaflet was prepared by the German Robert Koch Institute and handed out by the port health authority, the ship doctor and the ship's command respectively, asking the passenger to seek medical help, should influenza-like symptoms develop. For questions regarding this leaflet you can contact any German health department, or visit [www.rki.de](http://www.rki.de).

Health authorities are aiming to protect patients from life-threatening infections, to enable early detection of emerging cases and to prevent importation of the infection. In Germany, by law any suspected or confirmed infection with the novel type of influenza virus (including suspicious deaths) is reportable to local health authorities (typically the local health department). If you diagnose or suspect such an infection we suggest the following measures:

- Please contact your local health department and notify the (suspected) case. If possible, please have available information regarding the patient's travel (tour operator, name of the ship, itinerary, date and time of arrival, place of departure, place of arrival, potential stop-overs). In case homeward journey was conducted by air, please give airline, flight number, time of arrival, places of departure and arrival, and possible stop-overs).
- For diagnostic purposes, please take a nose and throat swab sample and send it to a laboratory capable of conducting appropriate tests. Your local health department can advise you in this matter (isolated tests for influenza A are not sufficient to confirm infection with swine flu).

### **Swine flu is clinically characterized by the following symptoms:**

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b><i>sudden onset of illness</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>fever <math>\geq 38</math> °C or chills</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>runny or stuffy nose</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>sore throat</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>cough or shortness of breath</i></b></li><li>- <b><i>muscle or joint pains, headache</i></b></li></ul> |
|---|

**For a case of influenza, please consider prescribing neuraminidase inhibitors in therapeutic dosage (according to standard recommendations). Nose and throat swab samples should be taken before therapy commences.**

If an influenza infection is confirmed, prophylaxis with neuraminidase inhibitors should be considered for contact persons (family members, medical personnel).

Many thanks for your cooperation!