

## Garswood surgery – Swine flu pandemic 2009

The information below is to help patients of Garswood Surgery to:

1. Decide whether they or someone in their family might have 'swine flu'
2. Understand what medical care is likely to offer them in these circumstances

These are inevitably a brief guide and we recommend people get further information from these websites:

[www.NHSDirect](http://www.NHSDirect) and <http://news.patient.co.uk>

Swine flu currently appears to be a variation of the seasonal influenza epidemics we are familiar with each winter. Fortunately the infection for the great majority of people who have caught it has not been severe and they have made a complete recovery after a few days' symptoms.

These symptoms are a high temperature [at least 38 deg C] with generally sufficient ill health to require bed-rest, usually with limb and muscle pains. Other symptoms may include headaches, sore throat, cough, diarrhoea and vomiting.

Normal measures such as ample fluids, paracetamol and appropriate rest are the essential parts of treatment .

It is also important to remember that even when these symptoms are present the chances are that their cause is **not** swine flu. Since there is already evidence that the virus can become resistant to 'Tamiflu' the benefits and risks of mass-treatment with anti-viral drugs such as Tamiflu remain unknown. For example, if people are given the drugs for a mild infection, would they still work for a later more severe infection?

Those recommended to have treatment when the diagnosis is likely include those with:

Chronic lung disease

Chronic heart disease

Chronic kidney disease

Chronic liver disease

Chronic neurological disease

Impaired immunity, such as people on steroid tablets

Diabetes

Those over age 65

Children under the age of 5 years }	} have also been recommended to have treatment,
Pregnant women }	
	} harder to assess for them

If you or a member of your family believe you may have swine flu **do not come to the surgery**. Explain the symptoms to a receptionist over the telephone and she will arrange for a doctor to call you back, and possibly visit you. If they recommend that you have Tamiflu etc, they will explain how you may obtain this.