

## **1 July: Updated Q & A's for Travellers. (Ministry of Health Website)**

### **Should I avoid travel?**

No, unless you are sick and then you should stay home till you are better.

### **What should I do before I leave home?**

Seek advice on influenza A (H1N1) before leaving. Your local medical authorities will advise on any precautions that should be taken before leaving and while you are in transit. This may include advice on medication, personal hygiene and other precautions.

Now that the new influenza A (H1N1) "swine flu" is spreading in communities, you need to be well-informed about what you need to do if you become unwell with an influenza-like illness before you leave home or while travelling.

### **If I get sick while I am in New Zealand, who should I contact?**

You should call a doctor in the first instance. Tourism operators, hotels and motels will have contact details for local doctors and contact details for registered medical practitioners and medical centres can be found at the front of all local telephone directories (phone book).

When in New Zealand you should contact a health provider by phone first, to avoid potentially infecting others.

Travellers who are concerned about their health may also contact Healthline on 0800 611 116 (freephone) 24 hours a day, seven days a week for information and advice. Healthline is a free service staffed by registered nurses.

### **Who will pay for my medical care if I don't have travel insurance?**

Visitors to New Zealand will need to meet at least some of the cost of medical care themselves. This is likely to be the cost of visiting a doctor which can be between \$80 NZD and \$100 NZD plus the additional cost of medication if you are not seriously ill. If you have mild to moderate symptoms of influenza, Tamiflu can be purchased over the counter at pharmacies for around \$75 a course, and does not require a prescription.

If you are very ill, or are at risk of getting very ill, you will be treated by the health system. Tamiflu will be provided at no charge from the national stockpile, for higher risk people who are unwell.

Note, if you require medical care for any condition unrelated to influenza A (H1N1) Swine Flu, you will be responsible for paying for the costs of health care.

### **If I get sick will I be quarantined in New Zealand?**

Now that the virus is beginning to spread within New Zealand, isolation and quarantine of cases and contacts amongst incoming travellers is no longer a focus. If you do get sick you are asked to isolate yourself (stay away from other people and don't go out in public) until you have recovered, or for 72 hours if you complete a course of anti-viral medication.

### **Do I need travel insurance?**

Travel insurance is strongly recommended for all overseas travel.

### **Will I be able to get help if my English language skills are not very good?**

Yes. Local District Health Boards have access to translators in a huge range of languages. When you

phone to make an appointment with a doctor, or speak to a health professional ask for a translator.

Healthline **0800 611 116** uses Language Line Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. When you call Healthline during these hours, the nurse or call handler can usually arrange for an interpreter. Outside these hours Healthline uses other interpreter services as far as possible. It is not always possible to locate an interpreter in a particular language at short notice.

<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/influenza-a-h1n1-questions#travel>