



# Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### MOHAWK TRIBE PRO-ACTIVE IN PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE SWINE FLU

*No Confirmed Cases Reported in the North Country*

**AKWESASNE TERRITORY** – St. Regis Mohawk Tribe’s Health Services is taking steps to monitor and prevent cases of swine flu in the Akwesasne Territory which include preventive measures and keeping track of any unusual number of employee absences. Tribal Health Services Director Debra Martin held a meeting on Monday morning to discuss what measures are going to be taken to address the issue that has become big news recently. “The most important thing is to provide a continual flow of accurate and up-to-date information so people know what’s going on and can take steps in the area of prevention,” she remarked. “We have established working relationships with other area and regional health care providers along with county public health officials.” Martin and Tribal Health Services physician Dr. Ben Kelly appeared on the afternoon talk show on radio station CKON at 2:00 PM on Monday to get the word out to community members.

Individuals are advised to wash their hands frequently with soap and water, especially after being in public areas, avoid touching their eyes, mouth and nose unless they wash their hands immediately before and to avoid others who are coughing and sneezing. These measures are important to combat all strains of flu, including the swine flu.

The cases discovered in the U.S. have been very mild and involve coughing, runny nose, fever and body aches. More severe cases may involve vomiting. Individuals who are exposed are advised to drink lots of fluid, take ibuprofen and rest. Individuals under the age of 18 should not be given aspirin or pepto bismal-types of medication.

If a person is exposed to the flu, symptoms will appear about 48 hours after exposure. They are contagious 24 hours before the onset of the symptoms and will remain contagious for seven days after symptoms appear. Employees who experience

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these symptoms are directed to stay home from work in order to prevent the spread of the flu and supervisors need to make sure that employees follow directions to remain at home.

Although the flu has resulted in fatalities in Mexico, it appears that victims had been affected by other types of influenza at the same time, placing more stress on their immune systems and reducing their ability to fight off the flu. “We have no cause for alarm and are taking pro-active measures to prevent the possibility of the flu,” said Martin. “This is the time of year for the flu season in general, so we prepare for some exposure to a variety of strains.”

The flu appears to be passed through the respiratory system and can be passed from human to human, but cannot be transmitted through pork consumption. Presently no vaccine exists for the swine flu, but the medicine for treatment of it has been stockpiled and will be distributed if necessary. Individuals having questions or concerns about the swine flu can contact Health Services at 518-358-3141 extension 117.

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The St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the St. Regis Mohawk People.