

No, Virginia, You Can't Get Swine Flu from Eating Pork

First birds and now pigs! Who's next?

By Rebecca Morley, MA



Everybody seems to be talking about swine flu these days. The outbreak continues to grow and because most people do not have immunity to this new virus, there are widespread concerns. Questions arise such as, "Can I get swine flu from eating pork?" There is no evidence to show that swine influenza can be transmitted through food. Eating properly handled and cooked pork and pork products is safe. Cooking pork to an internal temperature of 160 °F kills bacteria and viruses. (Tip below)

The immune system is one of the most important mechanisms for fighting disease, including swine flu. Nutrition has a significant role in determining the strength of the immune system. Simply put, good nutrition is an important factor in maintaining a healthy immune system. A balanced diversity of whole foods, especially whole-grains, a rainbow of fruits and vegetables, along with non-fat dairy, legumes, lean protein and healthy fats will give your immune system a good basic foundation. Add in the healthy benefit of a good night's sleep, plenty of exercise, and time for relaxation and you will be taking measures that studies show contribute to stronger immune systems.



TIP: Use safe methods of handling raw meat in the kitchen. Wash your hands and disinfect surfaces after handling raw meats. Do not use the same utensils or preparation surfaces for other foods until you have washed them. Cook meats to the recommended internal temperatures. Here is a great source for meat safety:
<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fttcook.html>

Resources: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/pdf/brochure.pdf>

& <http://co.missoula.mt.us/HealthServices/InfectiousDisease/SwineFlu09.htm>