

Swine flu is now a pandemic. Should you be worried?

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The markets responded last week to the outbreak of swine flu that started in Mexico and expanded to the U.S and now it is officially a [pandemic](#).

Swine flu has reached 74 countries, infecting nearly 29,000 people and now has been declared unstoppable. Experts are watching the Southern Hemisphere to see what the incidence will be this summer, yet, to date, the spread has not slowed.

What is amazing to me is how complacent and unconcerned most folks are. They report to me that people die every year of the flu, what is the big deal? I have heard a least a dozen people say the media has overblown the whole thing to which I reply, "No, they haven't."



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This flu is particularly worrisome. It is a combination of avian, swine and human flu that has mutated to become contagious between people. This combination has not happened before and we do not have resistance to it.

You see, most of us have had the flu many, many times. And while flu viruses are experts at mutating and changing, they usually have some characteristics of previous flu viruses. That is why healthy adults are at low risk for problems when the flu makes the rounds; they have probably had a similar virus in the past and they will get a much milder case.

But when you have a totally new virus, it will attack young and old, healthy and sick, with similar vengeance. That is what happened in 1918 and what the CDC worries may happen again.

What can you do? Of course the basics: good hand washing, stay away from crowded places, and stay healthy. There is also a recent study that taking [Vitamin D](#) may be a factor in avoiding the flu. If there is a vaccine next fall, it will be the year to get the shot.

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