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# Flu fears spread

## Worries prompt quarantine plans, pork bans

GENEVA: Canada became the third country to confirm human cases of swine flu yesterday as global health officials considered whether to raise the global pandemic alert level.

Nations from New Zealand to Spain also reported suspected cases and some warned citizens against travel to North America while others planned quarantines, tightened rules on pork imports and tested airline passengers for fevers.

Nova Scotia's chief public health officer, Dr. Robert Strang, said the east coast Canadian province had confirmed four "very mild" cases of swine flu in students ranging in age from 12 to 17 or 18. All are recovering, he said.

"It was acquired in Mexico, brought home and spread," Strang said.

The western province of British Columbia confirmed two further cases.

The news follows the World Health Organisation's decision on Saturday to declare the outbreak first detected in Mexico and the United States a "public health emergency of international concern."

A senior World Health Organisation official said the agency's emergency committee will meet for a second time tomorrow to examine the extent to which the virus has spread before deciding whether to increase the pandemic alert beyond phase 3.

The same strain of the A/H1N1 swine flu virus has been detected in several locations in Mexico and the United States, and it appears to be spreading directly from human to human, said Keiji Fukuda, WHO's assistant director-general in charge of health security.

Mexico's health minister says the disease has killed up to 86 people and likely sickened up to 1,400 since April 13. US

### SNAPSHOT

## Swine flu

**Contagious acute respiratory disease**

**Symptoms**

**Transmission**

● **Between pigs**



● **From pigs to humans**  
By **breathing infected particles**. Not transmitted by eating pork since cooking kills the virus

● **Between humans**  
In very rare cases

**High fever**

**Coughs and sneezes**

**Breathing difficulties**

**Loss of appetite**



Situation at 1600 GMT, April 26

**Mexico:** Over 1,300 people under surveillance

**US:** 20 cases of human infection detected

**World:** Precautionary measures spreading

- The virus detected in **Mexico** is **unusual** in that it **contains genes from several sources: 2 swine viruses, 1 avian virus, 1 human virus**
- This new virus can be transmitted **between humans**
- It therefore has **"pandemic potential"**, according to the WHO
- The human influenza vaccine does **not provide protection against swine flu**

officials say the virus has been found in New York, California, Texas, Kansas and Ohio, but so far no fatalities have been reported.

Governments including China, Russia and Taiwan began planning to put anyone with symptoms of the deadly virus under quarantine.

Others were increasing their screening of pigs and pork imports from the Americas or banning them outright despite health officials' reassurances that it was safe to eat thoroughly cooked pork.

Some nations issued travel warnings for Mexico and the United States.

WHO's emergency committee is still trying to determine exactly how the virus has spread, Fukuda said.

"Right now we have cases occurring in a couple of different countries and in multiple locations," he said. "But we also know that in the modern world that cases can simply move around from single locations and not really become established."

aising the pandemic alert phase could entail issuing specific recommendations to countries on how to halt the disease. — AP

## CASE COUNT

<b>Mexico</b>	86 (deaths)
<b>United States</b>	20 (cases)
<b>Canada</b>	6 (cases)
<b>Israel</b>	1 (suspected)
<b>France</b>	1 (case)
<b>Spain</b>	7 (suspected)
<b>New Zealand</b>	1 (suspected)
<b>Colombia</b>	9 (suspected)
<b>Australia</b>	2 (suspected)
<b>Brazil</b>	1 (suspected)