

## AWARENESS OF SWINE FLU IN AN URBAN AREA OF SOUTH WEST ANDHRA PRADESH

**Mukherjee S\*, Yoganand S, Sruthi T, VinayDutt, Velanganeeswara Rao**

Krupanidhi College of Pharmacy, Sarjapur Road, Bangalore – 560 035

\*Email: [swarup\\_mukherjee@rediffmail.com](mailto:swarup_mukherjee@rediffmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The 2009 flu pandemic is a global outbreak of a new strain of H1N1 influenza virus, often referred to colloquially as "swine flu"(SF). The virus contains combination of genes from swine, avian (bird), and human influenza viruses. Currently, there are 14,286 confirmed deaths worldwide. This figure is the sum of confirmed deaths reported by national authorities and the WHO. It states that total mortality from the new H1N1 strain is "unquestionably higher" than this. In different areas of megacities, where awareness about swine flu is more because people are regularly in touch with swine flu related propaganda, advertisement, Magazines, Television, etc. Nevertheless, it is not the case in urban area where AWARENESS is very low when compared to mega cities. Therefore, to assess the extent of awareness amongst the people a survey was performed in the urban area of south west Andhra Pradesh. For the experimental work a questionnaire was prepared and according to the data obtained they are categorized into three categories - Category- I, completely aware about SF (C-I), Category – II, Partially aware about SF(C-II), Category – III, completely unaware about SF (C-III). Again, extent of awareness about SF amongst different age groups was studied. The number of population (233) selected randomly in an urban place of south west Andhra and survey was performed with help of carefully designed questionnaire. According to age group, it has been found that the extent of awareness about Swine flu was more in the age group between 25 to 40 years than any other age group.

**Keywords:** Swine flu, H1N1 influenza virus, Category, Awareness

### INTRODUCTION

The 2009 flu pandemic is a global outbreak of a new strain of H1N1 influenza virus, often referred to colloquially as "swine flu"(SF). The virus contains combination of genes from swine, avian (bird), and human influenza viruses. Mild symptoms may include fever, sore throat, cough, headache, muscle or joint pains, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea. Those at risk of more severe infection include: asthmatics, diabetics those with heart disease, the immune compromised, children with neuro developmental conditions and pregnant women<sup>1,2</sup>.

In addition, some patients will develop viral pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome. This manifests itself as increased breathing difficulty and typically occurs 3–6 days after initial onset. Similar to other influenza viruses, pandemic H1N1 is typically contracted by person to person transmission through respiratory droplets. Symptoms usually last 4 to 6 days. To avoid spreading the infection, it is recommended that those with symptoms stay home, away from school, work and crowded places and those at risk group with severe symptoms may benefit from antivirals like oseltamivir or zanamivir<sup>3,4</sup>. This type of outbreak can be decreased by spreading the awareness about it in the mega cities where awareness about swine flu is more because people are regularly in touch with swine flu related propaganda, advertisement, Magazines, Television, etc. Nevertheless, it is not the case in urban area where awareness is low when compared to mega city. Therefore, in order to assess the extent of awareness amongst the people a survey was performed in an urban area of southwest Andhra Pradesh.

### EXPERIMENTAL

For the experimental work questionnaire were prepared and according to result, they are divided into three categories (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Different categories amongst people about awareness of SF

Category	Criteria for extent of awareness amongst people about SF
Category- I (C-I)	Fully aware – Literate and well known about SF
Category- II (C-II)	Partially aware – Literate but incomplete knowledge of SF
Category-III (C-III)	Completely unaware – Illiterate and unknown about SF

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

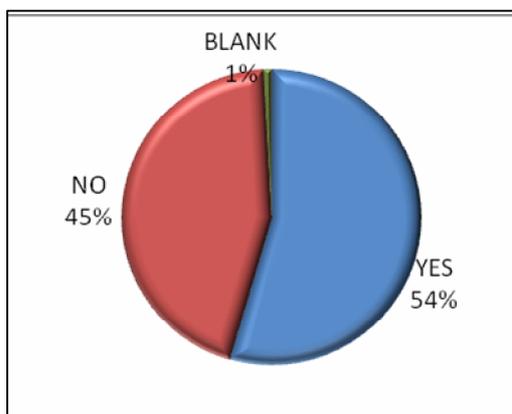
Leaflets were made including all seven questions. The number of population (233) selected randomly in that place and survey was performed with the help of carefully designed questionnaire. According to age group, it has been found that the extent of awareness about SF was more in the age group between 25 to 40 years than any other age group. At the end of the project, feedback (leaflets) was collected from the people and answer of each question was calculated in percentage basis (Figure 1 to Figure 6).

**SURVEY FORM TO ASSESS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SWINE FLU**

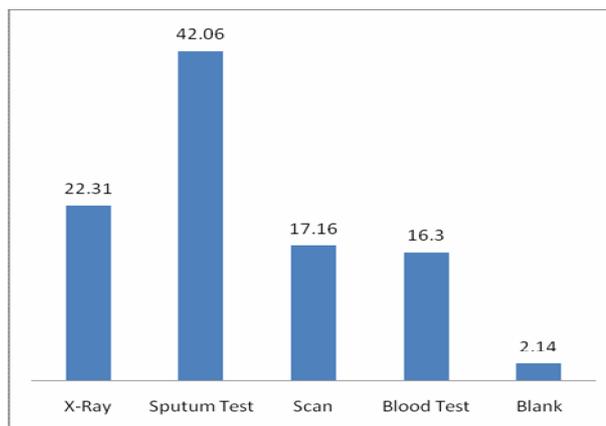
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: M/F

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

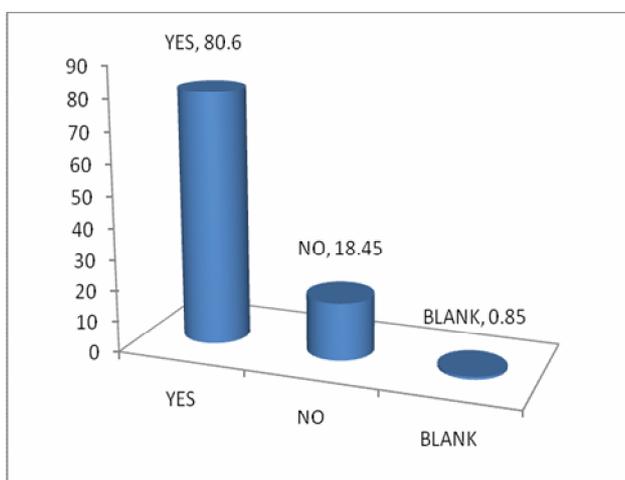
1. Cause of swine flu  
Yes/No/Blank
2. Important symptoms  
Yes/No/ Blank
3. S.F Detection Methods  
(a) X-Ray      (b) Sputum Test      (c) Scan      (d) Blood Test  
(e) Blank
4. Mode of Transmission  
(a) Water      (b) Respiratory droplets      (c) Direct Contact  
(d) Food      (e) Blank
5. Mode of Treatment  
(a) Surgery      (b) Radiation      (c) Vaccination      (d) Exercise and Diet  
(e) Blank
6. What is the most common complication of swine flu?  
(a) Bronchitis      (b) Tonsillitis      (c) Meningitis      (d) Encephalitis



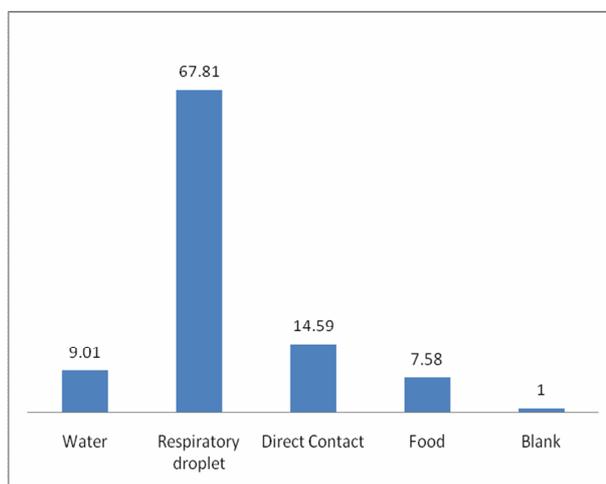
**Figure 1:** Answer in % of Q.1: Cause of SF



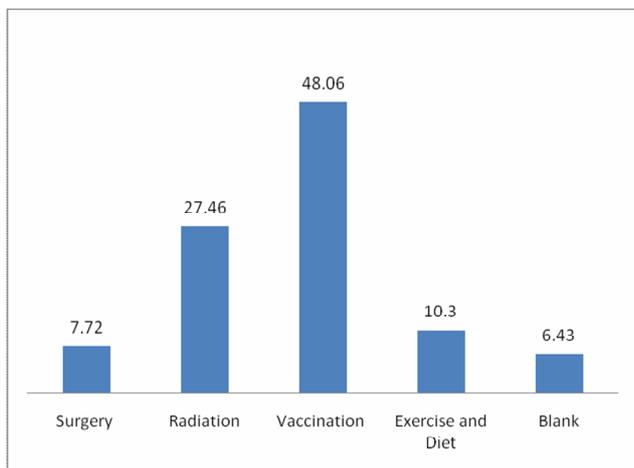
**Figure 3:** Answer in % of Q.3: SF detection methods



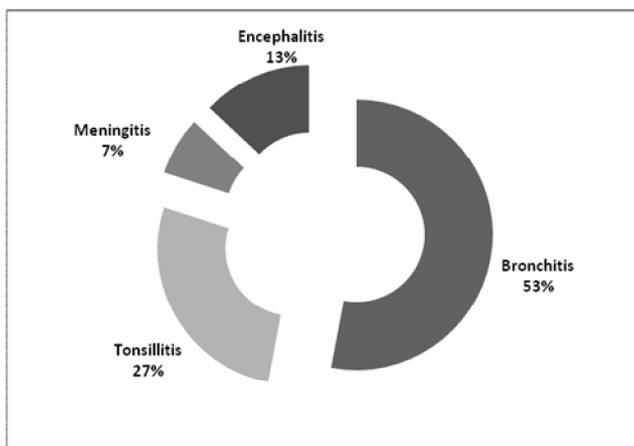
**Figure 2:** Answer in % of Q.2: Important symptoms



**Figure 4:** Answer in % of Q.4: Mode of transmission



**Figure 5:** Answer in % of Q.5: Mode of treatment



**Figure 6:** Answer in % of Q.6: What is the most common complication of swine flu?

**CONCLUSION**

It has been observed that the large number of people from age group of 25-40 years was very much aware about the Swine flu, causes as well as ways to prevent this outbreak. This was very much encouraging finding and would motivate all who has been involved on the war against SF. The category-II people were not completely aware about SF, so that this group was more prone to catch SF. Therefore, it’s necessary to provide better knowledge about SF, to this category. Category-III people were completely unaware about SF, may be because of their illiteracy, inadequate knowledge about SF to this category. Thus, this survey will be useful tool for taking up some measures in the right direction for spreading awareness about swine flu to every corner of the society particularly in urban and rural areas with the help of primary health centers and community in the region.

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