CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES MÉDECINS VÉTÉRINAIRES

## *Information for Pet Owners:*
# H1N1 and Your Pets

*As Canada prepares for the 2009-2010 influenza season, pet owners may be concerned about transmitting the H1N1 influenza virus to their animals. Keep your pet healthy during flu season. The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association suggests the following information to help reduce the risk of transmission.*

**Can I give my pet H1N1 influenza?**
H1N1 influenza can be transmitted to pet ferrets. It is also likely that the virus could be transmitted to pet birds and pot-bellied pigs, although this has not yet been identified. The risk of transmission from humans to dogs, cats, rodents and rabbits is low. To date, there has been one reported case of H1N1 in a cat. There have not been any cases of H1N1 reported in dogs, rodents or rabbits. Although they are probably not at risk, pet owners infected with H1N1 should be aware that there is a potential risk for transmission.

**What are the signs of influenza in pets?**
Common signs of illness would be expected to include not eating, drinking, or playing as usual. Pets may also cough, sneeze, or develop a fever.

**How can I reduce the risk of infecting my pets?**
Taking the following precautions can reduce the risk of transmitting an illness to your pets:

- Cough and sneeze into your arm, not your hand.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Limit contact with your pet when you are sick.
- Avoid touching your pet's face, as germs can be transmitted through the mouth and nose.

**I think my pet is sick. What should I do?**
Contact your veterinarian if your pet is showing any signs of illness. If your pet has been in contact with someone with influenza, make sure your veterinarian is notified. While it is very unlikely that your pet has developed influenza, it is important for your veterinarian to know if your pet has been exposed to the virus.

*Revised November 4, 2009, by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association in consultation with Dr. Scott Weese. A French version of this document is available on the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association's website www.veterinairesaucanada.net. Questions? Contact us at communications@cvma-acmv.org.*