

## Swine flu endemic claims 132 deaths in India

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**New Delhi:** India is on a high alert for swine flu following the death of another individual in the northern Indian state of Chhattisgarh. However, authorities have pointed out that there are ample amount of medicines and other kits available in all parts of India to handle the disease, including oseltamivir tablets, PPI kits, N-95 masks, triple layer masks, and VTM kits among others.

The latest outbreak of swine flu has claimed 19 lives across India in the past week alone. In the latest outbreak, 132 deaths and 708 cases of swine flu have been reported with the maximum number of cases coming from Rajasthan (236 cases of swine flu and 65 deaths).

The current outbreak of swine flu in India is in line with predictions made by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which had said that although the pandemic stage of the H1N1 virus ended in August 2010, during the post-pandemic years, localized outbreaks were expected as the virus "would take on the behaviour of seasonal influenza virus and continue to circulate for some years to come".

There has been a steady rise in the number of cases swine flu from the Indian states of Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab. Experts have highlighted that the epidemiology of the virus, which started as a pandemic in 2009 and has now been declared endemic, is similar to that of more dreaded viruses like HIV/AIDS, cholera and chikungunya.

Doctors have advised people not to panic and follow simple precautions like frequently washing hands and visiting a doctor if they feel they have the symptoms, including high fever, sore throat, breathlessness, body ache and fatigue.