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**BBC**

**Swine flu may have infected two million Scots**



Up to two million people in Scotland may have been infected with swine flu, scientists have estimated.

The swine flu outbreak of winter 2009-2010 was much more widespread than previously realised, according to the research by Edinburgh University.

Blood taken from Scots at the end of the H1N1 flu season showed almost half were carrying antibodies to the virus.

Most of the 44% who tested positive had contracted swine flu although some had acquired immunity from a previous flu.

The research suggested that many cases of swine flu went unreported as people did not attend hospital due to mild symptoms.

Only 100,000 people consulted their GP about flu, out of about two million who the study estimated could have contracted the virus.

Scientists said it was possible many people who were vaccinated against the virus were already naturally immune.

Mild cases

People living in the most deprived areas were twice as likely to have contracted the virus, according to the study.

Almost 1,600 adults from the east of Scotland and Glasgow took part in the study.

The research, carried out with the help of Strathclyde University, Health Protection Scotland and West of Scotland Specialist Virology Centre, was funded by the Chief Scientist Office and published in the journal PLoS One.

Professor Mark Woolhouse of Edinburgh University's centre for infectious diseases, who led the study, said: "This flu spread very quickly.

"Fortunately most cases were mild but this also means that they weren't reported."

He said that if there was a way to test people to see if they were already carrying immunity naturally it would mean there would not be such a drain on flu vaccinations in the future.

DAILY MAIL (London)

June 9, 2011 Thursday

'SILENT SWINE FLU' THAT HIT HALF UK  
  
**LENGTH:** 198 words

ALMOST half of the population caught swine flu during the pandemic although many didn't realise it, scientists revealed last night.

Blood taken from 1,600 Britons after the outbreak in 2009 and 2010 revealed that 44 per cent had the virus.Ê

While some had been vaccinated or had caught a similar infection years earlier, most had swine flu, according to researchers at Edinburgh University.Ê

Extrapolated across the country, this means 20 times more people had the H1N1 virus than estimated, even if it was so mild that many were not aware they had it.Ê

Almost 500 Britons were killed when it first struck, with another 600 dying last winter.

People in the most deprived areas were almost twice as likely to catch the bug, the journal PLoS ONE reports.Ê

Professor Mark Woolhouse, of the university's Centre for Infectious Diseases, said: 'It was pretty unexpected.

I imagine it's to do with the size of the household being smaller, making viruses more likely to spread.' Ê

Flu expert John Oxford said people shouldn't let the high rate of spread of the virus stop them being vaccinated against it in future

'Half the population hasn't had it and that means the virus could still get them,' he said.

Metro (UK)

June 9, 2011 Thursday   
Edition 1;   
Scotland

**Study claims two million had swine flu**  
**BYLINE:** Stephen Deal  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 32  
  
**LENGTH:** 214 words

UP TO two million people in Scotland caught swine flu during an outbreak in 2009-10, it was claimed yesterday.

Researchers said the H1N1 virus outbreak was much more widespread than previously thought.

Scientists found almost half the number of people they tested carried antibodies for the virus, three-quarters of whom had caught swine flu.

The rest had either been vaccinated or had caught a similar strain of flu in the past.

It is possible many people who were vaccinated against the virus were already immune, the scientists at the University of Edinburgh said.

Of the two million people believed by the researchers to have caught swine flu in winter 2009-10, it is thought just 100,000 consulted a GP.

Blood samples were taken from 1,600 adults in Scotland in March last year.

Of those, 44 per cent tested positive for the H1N1 strain.

The findings were then scaled up to the Scottish population as a whole to reach the two million figure.

The research also suggest those living in the poorest parts of the country were twice as likely to have been exposed to swine flu as those in wealthy areas.

The research was carried out in collaboration with Strathclyde University, Health Protection Scotland and West of Scotland Specialist Virology Centre.

It was published in the journal PLoS One

The Daily Telegraph (London)

June 9, 2011 Thursday   
Edition 1;   
Scotland

**'Almost half of Scots' caught swine flu**  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 14  
  
**LENGTH:** 156 words

Almost half of Scots caught swine flu during the first outbreak, according to new research showing the disease was 20 times more widespread than previously thought.

A study by Edinburgh University found that as many as two million people in Scotland caught the H1N1 virus during the winter of 2009/10.

But only one in 20 of those consulted their GP.

The scientists took blood samples from 1,600 adults in Scotland in March last year.

Of those, 44 per cent tested positive for the H1N1 strain.

If the same proportion of the entire Scottish population had the disease, this would mean two million people had swine flu.

Most of those who tested positive would have suffered swine flu, although a small proportion acquired immunity from a previous bout of flu, or had been vaccinated.

Prof Mark Woolhouse of the university's Centre for Infectious Diseases, said: "Fortunately most cases were mild but this also means that they weren't reported."

The Express

June 9, 2011 Thursday   
Scottish Edition

**Swine flu spread quickly in Scots**  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; 04  
  
**LENGTH:** 161 words

SWINE flu spread much more quickly than previously thought, with two million Scots infected by the end of the first "wave", new research has revealed.

A study found nearly half of adults developed antibodies for the virus by the end of March last year, indicating they had been exposed to it.

The majority had caught swine flu, while a quarter had been vaccinated or caught a similar strain of flu in the past.

But only one in 20 - around 100,000 people - visited their GP with symptoms of the illness.

Experts at Edinburgh University, who carried out the research, said it was possible many adults who were vaccinated were already immune to the virus.

The study, published in the journal PLoS One, analysed blood samples from 1,600 adults at the end of winter 2009-10.

Results were used to estimate how Scotland as a whole was affected.

Tests also suggested those in the poorest areas were twice as likely to have been exposed to swine flu as those in the most wealthy ones.

The Sun (England)

June 9, 2011 Thursday   
Edition 1;   
Scotland

**'2m swine flu victims'**  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 19  
  
**LENGTH:** 62 words

THE swine flu epidemic of winter 2009-10 hit up to TWO MILLION Scots, new research claims.

Scientists at Edinburgh University say tests suggest the outbreak was more widespread than thought.

But most cases went unreported as just 100,000 victims went to their GP.

The university's Professor Mark Woolhouse said: "This flu spread very quickly.

Fortunately most cases were mild."