

Swine flu deaths jump by 700 in a week: WHO

October 30 2009

The number of swine flu deaths jumped by 700 in a week, reaching more than 5,700 worldwide since the virus was first uncovered in April, World Health Organisation data indicated Friday.

The biggest rise was recorded in the Americas region, where 4,175 deaths have now been reported to the WHO, up 636 from data published last week.

"In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza transmission continues to intensify, marking an unusually early start to winter influenza season in some countries," said the WHO.

Fatal cases in Europe also climbed to at least 281, while those in Asia-Pacific rose to 1,070.

Amid the mounting death toll, the WHO said in a separate statement that experts concluded after a meeting this week that a single dose of swine [flu vaccine](#) would provide sufficient immunity against the A(H1N1) [virus](#).

These vaccines were found to be safe for usage by pregnant women and can also be administered alongside seasonal flu vaccines, according to conclusions drawn from the meeting.

While clinical data was limited on the effects of vaccination on children under the age of 10, the WHO said that countries should give a single

dose to as many children as possible rather than vaccinating only half of the young population with two shots each.

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