

# Ukraine calls for help fighting swine flue

November 1 2009

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Ukraine made an urgent appeal to world powers for help battling swine flu on Sunday, after 60 people died from respiratory problems in a week.

President Viktor Yushchenko wrote to the United States, the European Union, NATO and Ukraine's neighbours to ask for drugs and equipment to fight the spread of the A(H1N1) virus, according to a statement released by his office.

"The threat weighing on Ukraine's national security which we cannot fight alone forces me to ask our close friends and strategic partners for urgent help," Yushchenko wrote.

Ukraine has also ordered 16 tonnes of [antiviral drug Tamiflu](#) from Switzerland, the president's office said.

The health ministry said 60 people had died from respiratory problems in the past week, without indicating how many had succumbed to H1N1.

The former Soviet republic has so far reported four fatalities from more than 190,000 cases of swine [flu](#), with nearly 8,000 needing hospital treatment.

Poland and Slovakia responded to Yushchenko's appeal on Sunday night, sending protective masks and supplies of Tamiflu.

[Swine flu](#) has become a political issue in Ukraine as the country gears up for January's presidential election.

Both Yushchenko and his rival, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, have tried to take the lead in managing the crisis prompted by the epidemic.

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