

Over 180 swine flu deaths in Ukraine since September: ministry

February 8 2016

More than 180 people have died of swine flu in Ukraine since late September, the health ministry said on Monday, adding that three of the victims were children.

The war-scarred former Soviet country has been swept by a general flu epidemic that overall has claimed 220 lives since September 28, when the first illness was recorded, the ministry said.

It said the H1N1 virus, a respiratory disease that is contracted through contact between humans and pigs, accounted for 184 of the fatalities.

The so-called swine flu is transmitted between [people](#) through inhalation, but not from eating pork-related products, according to health experts.

The figures issued on Monday only cover the government-run parts of Ukraine, with no official data available for southeastern regions controlled by pro-Russian rebels since April 2014.

The ministry said the largest number of lethal cases were recorded in the central Black Sea region of Odessa, where 38 people have died. It did not say how many of those deaths were swine flu related.

Health ministry officials questioned by AFP could not provide immediate information about [swine flu](#) cases in previous years.

At least 50 people have also died from the virus in neighbouring Russia,

according to AFP calculations based on data from regional health authorities received on January 26.

A major H1N1 outbreak sparked a World Health Organization pandemic alert in June 2009, after the virus emerged from Mexico and the United States.

The epidemic killed around 18,500 people in 214 countries. The alert was lifted in August 2010.

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