



# drishti

## Covid-19 in States with High Swine Flu Rates

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### Why in News

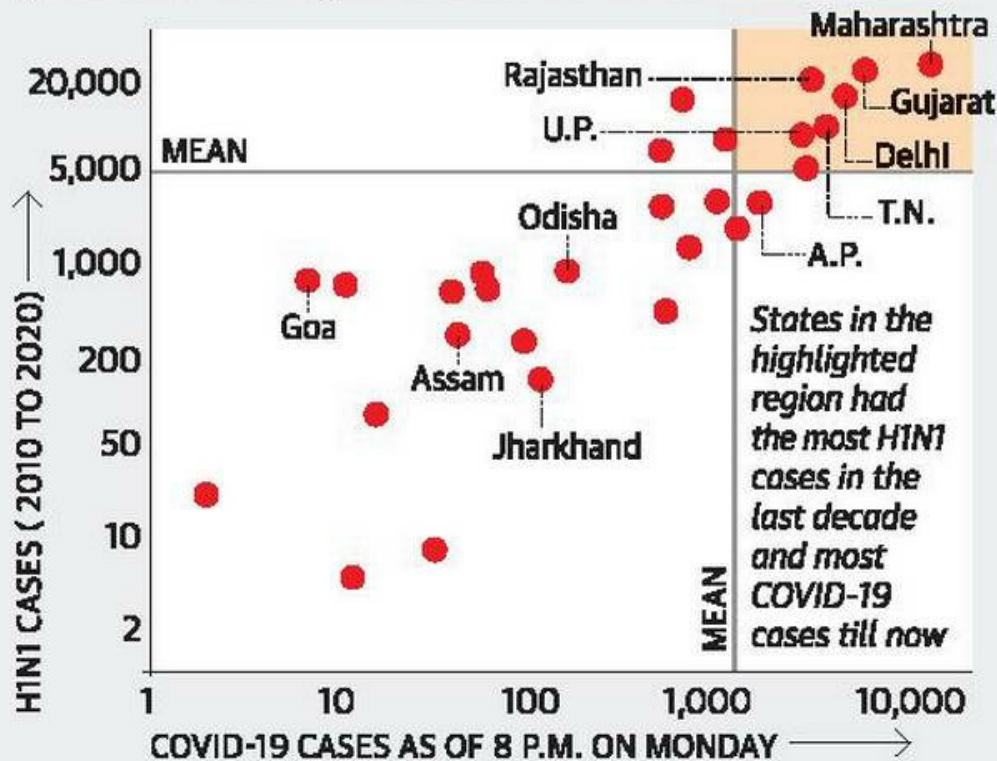
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**Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi and Tamil Nadu** account for about **70%** of India's confirmed **Covid-19** cases till now.

- Data from the Health Ministry's **National Centre for Disease Control** (NCDC), show that these are **also the states** which consistently accounted for the **majority of Swine Flu (H1N1) cases**, since 2015.
- The NCDC recorded Swine Flu cases this year as well as part of India's **Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme**.

## Viral connection

Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi and T.N., together account for about 68% of all COVID-19 cases and 63% of all the H1N1 cases recorded in the last decade. The chart plots H1N1 cases against COVID-19 cases for all States



### Key Points

- **Data History of Swine Flu**
  - **2019:** Rajasthan, Gujarat, Delhi and Maharashtra accounted for 54%.
  - **2018:** Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat accounted for 65%.
  - Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are among India's most populous states and see intense **migration** to other states for work still they have not been in the top list always.

- **Parallels between Covid-19 and Swine Flu**

- Both are **caused due to pathogens** that trace their **origins to viruses from non-human hosts** even though they **belong to different families**.

Both **respiratory** viruses that **spread through contact**.

- Both **infiltrate the lungs** and cause characteristic **pulmonary** infections but they have varying lethality.

- **Swine flu** infections have a **higher case fatality rate** (deaths per confirmed cases) and can cause significant **deaths in children as well as those less than 60**.
- Covid-19 is relatively **more dangerous** to those **above 60** and **almost harmless in children**.

However, due to lack of sufficient research, it cannot be said which age group is safer or not.

- High number of Covid-19 and Swine Flu cases have been observed in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The **relative dominance** of these diseases **can be attributed to the migration for work**.

- **Observations**

- **February-March** are typical months for influenza (viral infection of upper or lower respiratory tract) in India.
- Most influenza activity in **northern India** has been seen during the **summer** months but in **southern and western India**, cases occurred mostly during **winter** months.
- According to scientists, due to the novel nature of Covid-19, the **possibility of another spike later in the year cannot be ruled out**.
- For Swine flu, this year there is an **exceptional rise in testing and active surveillance** across states otherwise only few states have the infrastructure and system to actively report cases.

Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have 50 testing laboratories each for Covid-19 many of which are also deployed for Swine flu.

## **Swine Flu**

- It is caused by the **swine flu virus**, the **H1N1**.
- It is an **infection of the respiratory tract** characterized by the usual **symptoms of flu** like cough, nasal secretions, fever, loss of appetite, fatigue and headache.
- It is called swine flu because in the past it was known to occur in people who had been in the **vicinity of pigs**.
- The virus is **transmitted by short-distance airborne transmission**, particularly in crowded enclosed spaces. **Hand contamination** and **direct contact** are other possible sources of transmission.

**Source: TH**