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*The virus, formerly known as swine flu* ON THE EDGE OF COMMON SENSE  
by Baxter Black, D.V.M.

When the Asian Flu hit the country in 2003, were people warned to stay away from Chinese restaurants and Japanese cars? When the West Nile virus was diagnosed in humans did the Health Department tell us to avoid going to Egypt? How 'bout small pox? Were there Dwarf Warnings posted? Does riding Tennessee Walkers give you a charley horse? Do you catch the swine flu by eating barbecued spare ribs?

The answer to all the aforementioned questions is NO.

So why has the demand for pork in supermarkets and restaurants plummeted? Because it is very easy for a logical but simple mind to say, "I've got the blues. I better quit eating blueberries!" Just connect the dots, they think. It's easy to explain to a child that the tooth fairy gives them teeth, the stork gives them a little sister, and smoking Regular instead of King Size will stunt their growth.

Truly, somewhere, sometime in a land far, far away, a human may have contracted the virus from a pig. But how many people that have been subsequently diagnosed with swine flu have been within ten miles of a pig in the last ten days, or ten years? People catch the virus by coming in contact with an infected human. From a person!

That's right! Maybe someone you know, like a friend, relative, classmate or subpoena server, but not from giving CPR to a pig. You will not be exposed to the virus by hanging out with Miss Piggy, pork, bacon, chops, ham, hocks, ribs, bellies, pickled feet, University of Arkansas rooters, or an overbearing bore.

What does it matter, you say, if you're just playing it safe? Nothing, if you are also playing it safe by reducing your family's exposure to places where kids and people congregate like schools, malls, churches, picnics, Disneyland, Starbucks or the county jail.

But discontinuing your family's BLT's, ham and cheese, pulled pork or Chile Verde, has no more effect on their chances of catching swine flu than giving them a haircut or getting a tattoo!

It is the Pork Producers misfortune that the illness was tagged with the name swine flu because rumors ride in the Diamond Lane and facts putter along behind. The official name of this disease is the H ONE N ONE viral flu. I wish it were more catchy, maybe the Gopher flu, or the Ragweed flu, or the Spotted Owl flu. If it was, it might give us more incentive to eradicate the source.