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Houston Texans rookie Anthony Hill hospitalized with swine flu

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Texans rookie tight end Anthony Hill (FSY) was hospitalized this week with swine flu in what may be the first confirmed case in an NFL player this season.

THE HUDDLE: Coach says virus is isolated to one player

Hill is the only player on the team believed to have swine flu and other players are being monitored, Texans vice president of communications Tony Wyllie said Friday.

Hill, a fourth-round pick from North Carolina State, spent two nights in the hospital. Coach Gary Kubiak told the Houston Chronicle, which first reported the ailment, that Hill could be released later Friday.

Houston (1-2) hosts Oakland (1-2) on Sunday.

The Texans are believed to be the first team to confirm that one of its players has swine flu, also called the H1N1 virus. The NFL did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment.

In late August, Miami Dolphins defensive backs Sean Smith (FSY) and Jason Allen (FSY) were scratched from an exhibition game with flu-like symptoms, but the team declined to say whether the players were tested for swine flu. Smith and Allen declined comment.

The new swine flu seems no more deadly than regular winter flu, which every year kills 36,000 Americans and hospitalizes 200,000. This H1N1 strain sickens younger people more frequently than the over-65 population who are seasonal flu's main victims.

Flu-like symptoms have hit a number of college programs this season, including Wisconsin and No. 1 Florida, which last month held a number of players out of practice. The Gators had a round of flu shots about a week after a school official predicted that as many as 40% of students could catch swine flu this season.

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