

A Pandemic Guide for Families

National Health Ministries ~
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Don't Panic. Prepare.



This guide is designed to help you understand the threat of a pandemic influenza outbreak in our country and our community. It describes commonsense actions you can take now in preparing for a pandemic. We cannot predict how severe the next pandemic will be or when it will occur, but being prepared may help lower the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. Additional information including information for congregations and planning checklists for individuals and families can be found at www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/healthinfo/pandemic.htm. Information about the federal government response to the pandemic can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

What You Need to Know

An influenza (flu) pandemic is a worldwide outbreak of flu disease that occurs when a new type of influenza virus appears that people have not been exposed to before (or have not been exposed to in a long time). The pandemic virus can cause serious illness because people do not have immunity to the new virus. Pandemics are different from seasonal outbreaks of influenza that we see every year. Seasonal influenza is caused by influenza virus types to which people have already been exposed. Its impact on society is less severe than a pandemic, and influenza vaccines (flu shots and nasal-spray vaccine) are available to help prevent widespread illness from seasonal flu.

Influenza pandemics are different from many of the other major public health and health care threats facing our country and the world. A pandemic will last much longer than most flu outbreaks and may include "waves" of influenza activity that last 6-8 weeks separated by months. The number of health care workers and first responders able to work may be reduced. Public health officials will not know how severe a pandemic will be until it begins.

An Historical Perspective

In the last century there were three influenza pandemics. All of them were called pandemics because of their worldwide spread and because they were caused by a new influenza virus. The 1918 pandemic was especially severe.

- 1918-1919 Most severe, caused at least 675,000 U.S. deaths and up to 50 million deaths worldwide.
- 1957-1958 Moderately severe, caused at least 70,000 U.S. deaths and 1-2 million deaths worldwide.
- 1968-1969 Least severe, caused at least 34,000 U.S. deaths and 700,000 deaths worldwide.

Some Differences Between Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Flu

| Seasonal Flu | Pandemic Flu |
|---|---|
| Caused by influenza viruses that are similar to those already circulating among people. | Caused by a new influenza virus that people have not been exposed to before. Likely to be more severe, affect more people, and cause more deaths than seasonal influenza because people will not have immunity to the new virus. |
| Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny nose, and muscle pain. Deaths can be caused by complications such as pneumonia. | Symptoms similar to the common flu but may be more severe and complications more serious. |
| Healthy adults usually not at risk for serious complications (the very young, the elderly, and those with certain underlying health conditions at increased risk for serious complications). | Healthy adults may be at increased risk for serious complications. |
| Every year in the United State, on average: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu; • More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; and • About 36,000 people die from flu. | The effects of a severe pandemic could be much more damaging than those of a regular flu season. It could lead to high levels of illness, death, social disruption, and economic loss. Everyday life could be disrupted because so many people in so many places become seriously ill at the same time. Impacts could range from school and business closings to the interruption of basic services such a public transportation and food delivery. |

Importance and Benefits of Being Prepared

The effects of a pandemic can be lessened if you prepare ahead of time. Preparing for a disaster will help bring peace of mind and confidence to deal with a pandemic. When a pandemic starts, everyone around the world could be at risk. The United States has been working closely with other countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) to strengthen systems to detect outbreaks of influenza that might cause a pandemic.



A pandemic would touch every aspect of society, so every part of society must begin to prepare. All have roles in the event of a pandemic. Federal, state, tribal, and local governments are developing, improving, and testing their plans for an influenza pandemic. Businesses, schools, universities, and other faith-based and community organizations are also preparing plans. As you begin your individual or family planning, you may want to review your state's planning efforts and those of your local public health and emergency preparedness officials. State plans and other planning information can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/checklists.html. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and other federal agencies are providing funding, advice, and other support to your state. The federal government will provide up-to-date information and guidance to the public if an influenza pandemic unfolds. For reliable, accurate, and timely information, visit the federal government's official Web site at www.pandemicflu.gov.

Pandemic Influenza - Challenges and Preparation

- As you and your family plan for an influenza pandemic, think about the challenges you might face, particularly if a pandemic is severe. You can start to prepare now to be able to respond to these challenges. The following are some challenges you or your family may face and recommendations to help you cope. In addition, checklists and other tools have been prepared to guide your planning efforts. A series of planning checklists can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/checklists.html.
- Essential Services You Depend on May Be Disrupted
- Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted. These could include services provided by hospitals and other healthcare facilities, banks, restaurants, government offices, telephone and cellular phone companies, and post offices.

- Stores may close or have limited supplies. The planning checklists can help you determine what items you should stockpile to help you manage without these services
- Transportation services may be disrupted and you may not be able to rely on public transportation. Plan to take fewer trips and store essential supplies.
- Public gatherings, such as volunteer meetings and worship services, may be canceled. Prepare contact lists including conference calls, telephone chains, and email distribution lists, to access or distribute necessary information.
- Consider that the ability to travel, even by car if there are fuel shortages, may be limited.
- You should also talk to your family about where family members and loved ones will go in an emergency and how they will receive care, in case you cannot communicate with them.
- In a pandemic, there may be widespread illness that could result in the shut down of local ATMs and banks. Keep a small amount of cash or traveler's checks in small denominations for easy use.

Food and Water Supplies May Be Interrupted and Limited {A complete list of suggested items you will want to have on hand is included at the end of this document.}

Food and water supplies may be interrupted so temporary shortages could occur. You may also be unable to get to a store. To prepare for this possibility you should store at least one to two weeks supply of non-perishable food and fresh water for emergencies.

Food

- Store two weeks of nonperishable food.
- Select foods that do not require refrigeration, preparation (including the use of water), or cooking.
- Insure that formulas for infants and any child's or older person's special nutritional needs are a part of your planning.

Water

- Store two weeks of water, 1 gallon of water per person per day. (2 quarts for drinking, 2 quarts for food preparation/sanitation), in clean plastic containers. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.

Being Able to Work May Be Difficult or Impossible

- Ask your employer how business will continue during a pandemic.
- Discuss staggered shifts or working at home with your employer. Discuss telecommuting possibilities and needs, accessing remote networks, and using portable computers.

National Health Ministries 2.2007

www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth

- Discuss possible flexibility in leave policies. Discuss with your employer how much leave you can take to care for yourself or a family member
- Plan for possible loss of income if you are unable to work or the company you work for temporarily closes.

For the Business Checklist visit: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/business/businesschecklist.html>

Schools and Daycare Centers May Be Closed for an Extended Period of Time

Schools, and potentially public and private preschool, childcare, trade schools, and colleges and universities may be closed to limit the spread of flu in the community and to help prevent children from becoming sick. Other school-related activities and services could also be disrupted or cancelled including: clubs, sports/sporting events, music activities, and school meals. School closings would likely happen very early in a pandemic and could occur on short notice.

- Talk to your teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations about your school's pandemic plan, and offer your help.
- Plan now for children staying at home for extended periods of time, as school closings may occur along with restrictions on public gatherings, such as at malls, movie theaters.
- Plan home learning activities and exercises that your children can do at home. Have learning materials, such as books, school supplies, and educational computer activities and movies on hand.
- Talk to teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations about possible activities, lesson plans, and exercises that children can do at home if schools are closed. This could include continuing courses by TV or the internet.
- Plan entertainment and recreational activities that your children can do at home. Have materials, such as reading books, coloring books, and games, on hand for your children to use.

For the "Childcare, School, and University Checklist," visit:

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/tab5.html> Medical Care for People with Chronic Illness Could be Disrupted

In a severe pandemic, hospitals and doctors' offices may be overwhelmed.

- If you have a chronic disease, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, or depression, you should continue taking medication as prescribed by your doctor.
- Make sure you have necessary medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment.
- Talk to your healthcare provider to ensure adequate access to your medications.
- If you receive ongoing medical care such as dialysis, chemotherapy, or other therapies, talk with your health care provider about plans to continue care during a pandemic.

- A "Family Emergency Health Information Sheet" is provided in this guide and at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/planguide/familyhealthinfo.html> Pandemic Influenza - Prevention and Treatment

Stay Healthy

These steps may help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses such as the flu:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze-throw the tissue away immediately after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use an alcohol-based (60-95%) hand cleaner.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- If you get the flu, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings. In this way you will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.

Vaccination

Vaccines are used to protect people from contracting a virus once a particular threat is identified. After an individual has been infected by a virus, a vaccine generally cannot help to combat it. Because viruses change over time, a specific pandemic influenza vaccine cannot be produced until a pandemic influenza virus emerges and is identified. Once a pandemic influenza virus has been identified, it will likely take 4-6 months to develop, test, and begin producing a vaccine.

While there is currently no human pandemic influenza in the world, the federal government is facilitating production of vaccines for several existing avian influenza viruses. These vaccines may provide some protection should one of these viruses change and cause an influenza pandemic. The supply of pandemic vaccine will be limited, particularly in the early stages of a pandemic. Efforts are being made to increase vaccine-manufacturing capacity in the United States so that supplies of vaccines would be more readily available. In addition, research is underway to develop new ways to produce vaccines more quickly.

Antivirals

A number of antiviral drugs are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat and prevent seasonal influenza. Some of these antiviral medications may be effective in treating pandemic influenza. These drugs may help prevent infection in people at risk and shorten the

duration of symptoms in those infected with pandemic influenza. However, it is unlikely that antiviral medications alone would effectively contain the spread of pandemic influenza. The federal government is stockpiling antiviral medications that would most likely be used in the early stages of an influenza pandemic and working to develop new antiviral medications. These drugs are available by prescription only.

Stay Informed

- Knowing the facts is the best preparation. Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. If a pandemic occurs, having accurate and reliable information will be critical.
- Reliable, accurate, and timely information is available at www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Another source for information on pandemic influenza is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Look for information on your local and state government Web sites. Links are available to each state department of public health at www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Listen to local and national radio, watch news reports on television, and read your newspaper and other sources of printed and web-based information.
- Talk to your local health care providers and public health officials.

Questions and Answers

1. Will bird flu cause the next influenza pandemic?

Avian influenza (bird flu) is a disease of wild and farm birds caused by avian influenza viruses. Bird flu viruses do not usually infect humans, but since 1997 there have been a number of confirmed cases of human infection from bird flu viruses. Most of these resulted from direct or close contact with infected birds (for example: domesticated chickens, ducks, and turkeys). It is important not to handle, play with, or pick up dead birds. Information on who to contact in your state is at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/state/statecontacts.html>

The spread of bird flu viruses from an infected person to another person has been reported very rarely and has not been reported to continue beyond one person. A worldwide pandemic could occur if a bird flu virus were to change so that it could easily be passed from person to person. Experts around the world are watching for changes in bird flu viruses that could lead to an influenza pandemic.

2. Is it safe to eat poultry?

Yes, it is safe to eat properly cooked poultry. Cooking destroys germs, including bird flu viruses. The United States maintains trade restrictions on the importation of poultry and poultry products from countries where the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza strain has been detected in commercial or traditionally raised poultry, not in wild or migratory birds.

Guidelines for the safe preparation of poultry include the following:

- Wash hands before and after handling food.
- Keep raw poultry and its juices away from other foods.
- Keep hands, utensils, and surfaces, such as cutting boards, clean.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached the safe internal temperature - in all parts of the bird.

Cook poultry to at least 165°F to kill food-borne germs that might be present, including the avian influenza virus. For more information, see poultry preparation fact sheets at:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Poultry_Preparation_Fact_Sheets/index.asp

3. What types of birds can carry bird flu viruses?

Avian influenza viruses can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl, as well as a wide variety of other birds, including migratory waterfowl.

Each year, there is a flu season for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others, depending on how strong the virus. A weak virus may cause only mild illness in infected poultry and birds but a strong virus could cause severe and extremely contagious illness, and even death, among infected poultry and birds.

4. Will the seasonal flu shot protect me against pandemic influenza?

- No, it won't protect you against pandemic influenza. But flu shots can help you to avoid seasonal flu.
- Get a flu shot to help protect you from seasonal flu.
- Get a pneumonia shot to prevent secondary infection if you are over the age of 65 or have a chronic illness such as diabetes or asthma. For specific guidelines, talk to your health care provider or call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at 1-800-232-4636. • Make sure that your family's immunizations are up-to-date.

What is the U.S. government doing to prepare for pandemic influenza?

- Monitoring migratory and wild birds for avian flu.
- Working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other nations to help detect human cases of bird flu and respond to an influenza pandemic, if one begins.

National Health Ministries 2.2007

www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth

- Supporting the manufacturing and testing of influenza vaccines, including finding more reliable and quicker ways to make large quantities of vaccines through cell-based technologies.
- Developing a national stockpile of antiviral drugs to help treat and control the spread of disease.
- Supporting the efforts of federal, state, tribal, and local health agencies to prepare for and respond to pandemic influenza, including hosting planning summits with state and local leaders in each state.
- Working with federal agencies to prepare and to encourage communities, businesses, and organizations to plan for pandemic influenza. These efforts have included joint exercises in pandemic preparation.

The BIG list of items...

We take the grocery store for granted. In the event of a panic (like the first case of bird flu in the USA), just think how very few frightened shoppers it would take for your neighborhood grocery to run out of a product like rice. A few determined families could take most of it! The stores could be stripped bare in minutes. Prepare. Do not wait.

Our list is based on shelf life, availability, most commonly used and price. Cross-off what you or your kids dislike. Be cautious of big sizes of perishables, since waste will quickly nullify any savings. Some items have a long shelf life, but must be used quickly after opening. Perishables might be available for a short time, but this list is comprised of storage foods, those that can be stored for many months or even for years. Check every expiration date.

Try to "rotate" a decent supply of food and still always have plenty on hand in case of an emergency. But many of these items have a very long shelf life, and can be used strictly as emergency storage. This list is designed for some variety, so that the kids and teens in our "pod" don't meltdown from boredom. No one can tell you how much to buy, but try to work your way toward a three month supply.

Realistically, if you had to, you could purchase only bulk size bags of rice, dried beans, flour, shortening, possibly corn, along with some source of Vitamin C. You could last a very long time for very little money. For very basic survival, we would recommend that you have your water purifier, cooking supplies, and a way to stay warm before an elaborate variety of food- but better food (and some games) will be a real help in an extended "lock-down".

Emergency Pantry: The List

If you plan to store water against a shortage, the rule of thumb is one gallon per person per day.

- Baking mixes (Pie crust mix plus canned pie filling =cobbler)
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Barley
- Bay leaves (insects avoid foods like flour with a bay leaf stored inside the bag)
- Beans-dry
- Bottled drinks and juices (not refrigerated type)
- Brown Sugar
- Bullion, concentrated broth
- Butter flavoring, like Molly McButter. Freeze for storage if you can.
- Candy
- Canned beans
- Canned broth
- Canned chicken breast
- Canned chili
- Canned diced tomatoes, other tomato products, and sauces
- Canned French fried onions for green bean casserole
- Canned fruit
- Canned milk, evaporated milk
- Canned pie filling (don't overlook, great item)
- Canned pumpkin
- Canned Salmon, oysters, tuna
- Canned soups or stew
- Canned sweet potatoes
- Canned veggies
- Gator Aid, Cans of lemonade mix, kool aid other canned dry drink mixes
- Cheese dips in jars
- Cheese soups, like cheddar, broccoli cheese, and jack cheese
- Chinese food ingredients
- Chocolate bars & chips
- Chocolate syrup, strawberry syrup squeeze bottles (about that dry milk, again)
- Coffee filters (also for straining silt out of water)
- Corn Masa de Harina or corn tortilla mix
- Corn meal
- Corn starch for thickening
- Cream of Wheat
- Cream soups (good for flavoring rice & pasta, too)
- Dried eggs
- Dried fruit
- Dried onion (big containers at warehouse stores)
- Dried soups
- Dry cocoa
- Dry coffee creamer (big sealed cans, many uses including making dry milk taste better)
- Dry milk powder
- Dry Mustard
- Flour, self rising flour, tortilla mix for flour tortillas, wraps, and flatbread
- Garlic powder

National Health Ministries 2.2007

- Granola bars (not great shelf life)
- Hard candy
- Honey (also reputed to reduce viral load in throat and esophagus)
- Hot chocolate mix
- Instant coffee if you drink it, or coffee and a manual drip cone or similar
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Jarred or canned spaghetti sauce
- Jarred peppers
- Jellies and Jams
- Ketchup
- Marshmallow cream / Marshmallows
- Mayo /Miracle Whip packets
- Mexican food ingredients
- Mustard
- Nestle Table Cream (substitute for sour cream, cream, or half-and-half) in lots of ethnic stores
- Nuts (freeze if you have room)
- Oatmeal
- Oil (Shelf life not great, freeze if you have room)
- Olive oil
- Olives, green and black
- Onion powder
- Packaged bread crumbs
- Pancake mix, one step, and other mixes that already have the eggs in them
- Parmesan
- Pasta, Pasta, Pasta
- Peanut butter, nut butters
- Pepper
- Pet food
- Pickles, relish (not refrigerator case type)
- Powdered sugar
- Power bars
- Raisins
- Ramen
- Ravioli or any canned pasta you can stand
- Real butter or favorite margarine-keep frozen until disaster if you can.
- Salsa and hot sauces (Franks Hot Sauce!)
- Salt
- Spam or Treet :(!
- Spices and herbs your family likes
- Stovetop Dressing mix
- Sugar
- Summer sausage - anything smoked will keep longer
- Sweetened condensed milk
- Syrups
- Tea
- Trail mix
- Ultra pasteurized milk
- Vanilla (improves dry milk, too)
- Velveeta (watch carton date, freeze for storage if possible)
- Vienna sausage

- Yeast, if you think you would use it. May be frozen.
 - Baby food
 - Pet food
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SUPPLIES FOR COMFORT AND SAFETY

- BLEACH - Clorox Type
 - *Gas in cars, always.
 - *Non-electric can opener
 - *Dishwashing detergent
 - *Small Scrubie
 - *Paper Towels
 - *Toilet paper, a very important item
 - *Tissues
 - *Matches
 - *Long-snout type lighters
 - *Candles
 - *Portable heater
 - *Emergency radio
 - *Emergency lighting
 - *Camp stove & fuel
 - *Games, playing cards, craft supplies, hobby supplies, free word games and other games off the net
 - *Plastic bags, different sizes, including large ones, many uses
 - *Duct tape
 - *Scissors
 - *Disposable plates, forks, spoons, hot and cold cups
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Additional information will be made available to employees of PC (USA) as the specific plans for responding in this community become more clear.

National Health Ministries posts updated documents on the website at <http://www.pcusa.org/nationalhealth/healthinfo/pandemic>

Excellent resources for congregation are also available from the Extension Service (part of the Department of Agriculture) including an on-line course for Faith Based organizations to use in preparing for pandemic flu. Their site is found at - <http://www.eden.lsu.edu/LearningOps/FBO/> .

