

St. Lawrence County
Public Health Department



(315) 386-2325

Additional information at:
www.pandemicflu.gov
www.nyhealth.gov

04/28/06

BE PREPARED FOR
PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

It's Not Flu as Usual


YOUR
HEALTH
IS



IN
YOUR
HANDS



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department



A Message from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services;

“We are in a race, a race against time and complacency. There is a role for everyone and we must count on everyone to fulfill their role.

By definition pandemic is defined as a global event. In reality, a pandemic is a local crisis worldwide. It can happen in every state and every city and every town at almost the same time.

A pandemic is not like a hurricane or an earthquake, where resources and help can be shifted from one area to another. Should it occur, every community will need to rely on its own planning and its own resources as it fights the outbreak.

Preparation is a continuum. Each day we prepare brings us closer to being ready. We are better prepared today than we were yesterday. And we must be better prepared tomorrow than we are today.”

*Secretary, Michael Leavitt, HHS
March, 13, 2006*



YOUR HEALTH IS IN YOUR HANDS

Help fight germs that cause influenza and other serious diseases. Always wash your hands with soap and warm water or use a waterless hand cleanser after:

- ◆ Blowing your nose or coughing
- ◆ Using the bathroom
- ◆ Having contact with or being near someone who is ill
- ◆ Touching handrails, doorknobs, telephones or other things handled by many people.

How do I stop the spread of germs if I'm sick?

- ◆ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue in a waste basket.
- ◆ If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve / elbow.
- ◆ After coughing or sneezing, always clean your hands with soap & water or an alcohol-based hand cleanser.
- ◆ Stay home when you are sick
- ◆ Do not share eating utensils, drinking glasses, towels or other personal items.

How can I stay healthy?

- ◆ Clean your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleanser.
- ◆ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ◆ Avoid close contact with people who are sick, if possible.
- ◆ Get vaccinated! Influenza (flu) and pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccines can prevent some serious respiratory illnesses.

HANDWASHING :

is the best way to prevent the spread of infection

- You're at work—You're busy.
- Your hands look clean—But, they're not.
- Your hands have germs on them that could make someone sick.
- You could get sick—Your family could get sick—Your customers could get sick.
- If you handle food, you must wash your hands often.

WHEN should you wash your hands

- When arriving at work
- After using the bathroom
- After smoking
- After sneezing
- After touching your hair, face, clothing
- Before eating or drinking
- Before handling food, especially ready-to-eat foods like salads and sandwiches
- After handling garbage
- After handling dirty equipment, dishes, or utensils
- After touching raw meats, poultry and fish

HOW should you wash your hands?



- Wet your hands with warm running water.
- Lather with soap and scrub between fingers, on the backs of your hands, and under nails. Wash for at least 20 seconds, or as long as it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' to yourself twice.
- Dry hands. Use single-use paper towels or electric hand dryers.
- Use a paper towel when you turn off the tap.

What is Pandemic flu:

A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease in many countries at the same time. A pandemic of influenza-or flu-occurs when a new flu virus rapidly spreads from country to country around the world. The swift spread of a pandemic flu happens because people are not immune to the new flu virus, and an effective vaccine would take months to develop.

Why is everyone so concerned about this flu? Don't people get the flu every year?

The flu we get each year is called "seasonal" flu. Although the virus changes slightly from year to year, it is always a version of the flu from recent years so most of us have build-up some immunity or tolerance to it. The flu that may develop from the bird flu would be completely new and that makes it more dangerous because we have no immunity to it.

What is the difference between a pandemic and an epidemic?

An epidemic is an outbreak of a disease that occurs in one or several limited areas, like a city, state or country.

Once the disease spreads beyond the borders of several countries and affects many countries across the globe, it is called a pandemic. In the last century, several pandemics of influenza occurred—the biggest one is 1918. During the 1918 pandemic, at least 500,000 Americans died, estimated deaths worldwide numbered 10 million.

***As with the annual flu, an effective vaccine, when available, will be the best safeguard against pandemic flu.**



Key Differences Between Annual Flu and Pandemic Flu

ANNUAL FLU*

- ▶ Occurs every year during the winter months.
- ▶ Affects 5% to 20% of the US population.
- ▶ Globally, kills 500,000 to 1 million people each year; 36,000 to 40,000 in the U.S.
- ▶ Most people recover within a week or two.
- ▶ Death generally confined to “at risk” groups, such as the elderly (over 65); the young (children aged 6-23 months); those with existing medical conditions like lung diseases, diabetes, cancer, kidney, or heart problems; and people with compromised immune systems.
- ▶ Vaccination is effective because the virus strain in circulation each winter can be fairly reliably predicted.
- ▶ Annual vaccination, when the correct virus strain is used, is fairly effective and antiviral drugs are available for those most at risk of serious illnesses.

From “Trust for America’s Health”



Family Emergency Health Information Sheet

It is important to think about health issues that could arise if an influenza pandemic occurs, and how they could affect you and your loved ones. For example, if a mass vaccination clinic is set up in your community, you may need to provide as much information as you can about your medical history when you go, especially if you have a serious health condition or allergy.

Create a family emergency health plan using this information. Fill in information for each family member in the space provided. Like much of the planning for a pandemic, this can also help prepare for other emergencies.

Family Member Information:

Family Member	Blood Type	Allergies	Past/ Current Medical Conditions	Current Medications/ Dosages

From: www.pandemicflu.gov



Prepare ahead

Talk to your friends and family about emergency plans and make sure that children know who to contact in emergency. Know your family's medical histories, social security numbers and other basic information.

Family Emergency Health Information Sheet

Emergency Contacts:

Contacts	Name/Phone Number
Local personal emergency contact:	
Out of town personal emergency contact:	
Hospitals near: Work:	_____
School:	_____
Home:	
Family Doctor:	
Central New York Poison Center For poisoning information:	1-800-222-1222
Pharmacy:	
Employer contact and emergency Information:	
School contact and emergency Information:	
Religious/spiritual organization:	
Veterinarian:	



PANDEMIC FLU*

- ▶ Occurs three to four times a century and can take place in any season. May come in “waves” of flu activity that could be separated by months.
- ▶ Experts predict an infection rate of 25% to 50% of the U.S. population, depending on the severity of the virus strain.
- ▶ The worst pandemic of the last century – the “Spanish flu” of 1918 –killed 500,000 in the U.S. and 50 million worldwide.
- ▶ Usually associated with a higher severity of illness and consequently a higher risk of death.
- ▶ All age groups may be at risk for infection, not just “at risk” groups. Otherwise fit adults could be at relatively greater risk, based on patterns of previous epidemics. For example, adults under age 35 (a key segment of the U.S. workforce) were disproportionately affected during the 1918 pandemic.
- ▶ A vaccine against pandemic flu may not be available at the start of a pandemic. New strains of viruses must be accurately identified, and producing an effective vaccine could take six months or more.
- ▶ Antiviral drugs may be in limited supply, and their effectiveness will only be known definitively once the pandemic is underway.

Additional information at:

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Be Prepared

Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted. These could include services provided by hospitals, and other health care facilities, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, and post offices. During a pandemic you may not be able to get to a store. Even if you can get to a store, it may be out of supplies. Public waterworks services may also be interrupted. Being prepared and stocking supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.

Preparing Your Home and Family For Emergencies

Items to keep in your home for emergency use.

Food and water

Have a supply of canned and dried food and fresh water on hand—enough for several days. Although basic utilities like electricity and water should remain on, there may be disruptions in some services. Grocery stores may not have enough staff to remain open.

Items for personal comfort

You may wish to have extra items on hand to make your time at home more comfortable like, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, cleaners and activities for children.

Cash

Make sure to have some cash on hand. If necessary, you may be able to have items delivered to your door.

Pets

Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough food and water for them and other necessities like extra litter.

Phone

If there are disruptions to power, you will need a standard “wired” phone—one that does not run on power from an electrical outlet. Cordless phones will not operate when the power is out. Cellular phones may work if cellular towers are functioning and cellular phone battery is charged.



Medications

If you must take medications on a regular basis, be sure to have enough of a supply to last for several days.

Large trash bags

Garbage service may be disrupted or postponed for many days. Have bags on hand to store garbage safely.

The New York State Department of Health is encouraging New Yorkers to have at least a two-week supply of essential household items.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Food and Non-perishables

- ▶ Ready to eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables and soups
- ▶ Protein or fruit bars
- ▶ Peanut butter or nuts
- ▶ Canned juices
- ▶ Bottled water
- ▶ Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- ▶ Dry cereal or granola
- ▶ Dried fruit
- ▶ Crackers
- ▶ Pet food

Medical, Health & Emergency Supplies

- ▶ Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment
- ▶ Soap and water, or alcohol-based hand wash
- ▶ Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- ▶ Thermometer /bandages and gauze pads/ adhesive tape
- ▶ Anti-diarrhea medication
- ▶ Manual can opener
- ▶ Cleansing agent/soap
- ▶ Portable radio
- ▶ Scissors, tweezers, and safety pins
- ▶ Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers, feminine products
- ▶ Vitamins
- ▶ Disposable gloves
- ▶ Flashlight & batteries
- ▶ Garbage bags

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