

Tips for Family Pandemic Planning

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. Individuals and families will have an essential role in protecting themselves and the public's health and safety when an influenza pandemic occurs. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family.

To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would want to be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

- Use proper hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette, social distancing, etc.
- Teach your children to wash their hands frequently with soap and water and model the correct behavior.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and be sure to model that behavior.
- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.
- If someone in your household is sick, try to keep them in a room separate from common areas.

Items to have on hand for extended stays at home:

(Examples of food & non-perishables)

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Canned juices
- Bottles of water
- Canned or jars of baby food and formula

(Examples of medical, health and emergency supplies)

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, and disposable diapers

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.
- 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.

Family Pandemic Planning FAQ's

How long can influenza virus remain viable on objects (such as books and doorknobs)?

Studies have shown that an influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for 2 to 8 hours after being deposited on the surface.

What if soap and water are not available and alcohol-based products are not allowed in my facility?

If soap and water are not available and alcohol-based products are not allowed, other hand sanitizers that do not contain alcohol may be useful.

What surfaces are most likely to be sources of contamination?

Germs can be spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. Droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air. Germs can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk, for example, and then touches their own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

How should waste disposal be handled to prevent the spread of influenza virus?

To prevent the spread of influenza virus, it is recommended that tissues and other disposable items used by an infected person be thrown in the trash. Additionally, persons should wash their hands with soap and water after touching used tissues and similar waste.

What household cleaning should be done to prevent the spread of influenza virus?

To prevent the spread of influenza virus it is important to keep surfaces (especially bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children) clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

How should linens, eating utensils and dishes of persons infected with influenza virus be handled?

Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but most importantly these items should not be shared without washing thoroughly first. Linens (such as bed sheets and towels) should be washed by using household laundry soap and tumbled dry on a hot setting. Individuals should avoid "hugging" laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating themselves. Individuals should wash their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub immediately after handling dirty laundry. Eating utensils should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with water and soap.

Planning now for a severe pandemic will assist you and your family as you prepare for interventions that might be recommended. Resources are available at <http://pandemicflu.gov/individualfamily/checklist.html>.

** Information taken from www.pandemicflu.gov and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov **

What should I use for hand cleaning?



Washing hands with soap and running water (for as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice) will help protect against many germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

If your child is sick

What can I do if my child gets sick?

If your child is 5 years or older and otherwise healthy and gets flu-like symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids.

If your child is younger than 5 (and especially younger than 2) or of any age and has a medical condition like asthma, diabetes, or a neurologic problem and develops flu-like symptoms, ask a doctor if your child should be examined. This is because younger children (especially children younger than 2) and children who have chronic medical conditions may be at higher risk of serious complications from flu infection, including 2009 H1N1 flu. Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness.

What if my child seems very sick?

Even children who have always been healthy before or had the flu before can get a severe case of flu.

Call or take your child to a doctor right away if your child of any age has:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough.

Can my child go to school, day care or camp if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children.

When can my child go back to school after having the flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F or 37.8°C.

For more information, visit
www.cdc.gov or www.flu.gov
or call
800-CDC-INFO



Seasonal and 2009 H1N1 Flu:

A Guide for Parents



Flu information

What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs caused by flu viruses. Flu viruses cause illness, hospital stays and deaths in the United States each year. There are many different flu viruses and sometimes a new flu virus starts spreading among people and making people sick.

What is 2009 H1N1 flu?

2009 H1N1 flu (sometimes called swine flu or novel flu) is a new and very different flu virus that is spreading worldwide among people. This flu season, scientists expect both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu to cause more people to get sick than a regular flu season. More hospital stays and deaths may also occur.

How serious is the flu?

Most people with 2009 H1N1 have had mild illness and have not needed medical care and the same is true of seasonal flu. However, the flu can be serious, especially for young children (risk is highest in children younger than 2 years) and children of any age who have certain chronic medical conditions. These conditions include asthma or other lung problems, diabetes, weakened immune systems, kidney disease, heart problems and neurological and neuromuscular disorders. Children with these conditions can have more severe illness from any flu, including from the 2009 H1N1 flu virus.

How does flu spread?

Both 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are thought to spread mostly from person to person through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with flu. People also may get sick by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Some people sick with the flu will not have a fever.

How long can a sick person spread the flu to others?

People infected with seasonal and 2009 H1N1 flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5 to 7 days after. However, some people can shed virus for longer, especially children and people with weakened immune systems and people infected with 2009 H1N1 flu.

Protect your child

How can I protect my child against flu?

Get a seasonal flu vaccine for yourself and your child to protect against seasonal flu viruses.

Get a 2009 H1N1 vaccine for your child. Ask your doctor about whether you should get one too.

Take - and encourage your child to take - everyday steps that can help prevent the spread of germs.

This includes:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- If someone in the household is sick, try to keep the sick person in a separate room from others in the household, if possible.

- Keep surfaces like bedside tables, surfaces in the bathroom, kitchen counters and toys for children clean by wiping them down with a household disinfectant according to directions on the product label.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by sick persons in your household in the trash.

Is there a vaccine to protect my child from H1N1 flu?

A yearly seasonal flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal flu. This vaccine is recommended for children 6 months through 18 years of age and all people who are close contacts (caregivers) of children younger than 5 years of age.

A vaccine against 2009 H1N1 flu also is being made. This vaccine is recommended for all children and young adults 6 months through 24 years of age. Other people, including close contacts of children younger than 6 months of age and adults with certain chronic medical conditions, are recommended for vaccination too. More information about the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine and the seasonal flu vaccine is available on the CDC Web site.

Is there medicine to treat the flu?

Antiviral drugs can treat both seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 flu.

The priority use for these drugs this season is to treat people who are seriously ill (hospitalized) or people who are sick with the flu and either have a medical condition or are in an age group that puts them at high risk of serious flu complications. Antiviral drugs can make people feel better and get better sooner and may prevent serious flu complications. These drugs need to be prescribed by a doctor and they work best when started during the first 2 days of illness. These drugs can be given to children.

