

Pandemic Flu – A Guide for Employees and Families

Be Prepared

Stay Healthy

Keep Informed

WE ALL PLAY A ROLE IN FIGHTING AGAINST THE PANDEMIC FLU

While federal, state and local governments are working hard to implement plans for responding to pandemic flu, there are some steps everyone can take that are necessary to protect you and your family.

PREPARE

There are many simple things you can do to prepare for the pandemic flu.

- Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted or not available. These could include medical services, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, grocery stores, schools, daycare centers and post offices.
- Think about how you can rely less on transportation during a pandemic. Consider other ways to get to work or, if possible, work from home.
- Prepare backup plans for taking care of loved ones who are far away.
- Consider how to care for people with special needs in case the services they rely on are not available.
- Stock a supply of water and food. During a pandemic you may not be able to a store. Even if you can get to a store, it may be out of supplies. Public utilities such as water service may also be interrupted. Stock suppliers can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Food Strategies include:
 - Store a supply of non-perishable foods and bottled water.
 - Easy to prepare foods in case you are unable to cook.
 - Food that requires little or no water.

MAKE GOOD HYGIENE A HABIT

Take common-sense steps to limit the spread of germs.

- Hand washing is a simple way to prevent the spread of infection.
- Wash hands frequently and vigorously with soap and water.
- Use warm or hot water when possible.
- First wet your hands, then apply liquid or clean bar soap.
- Work up a good lather and wash all of the surfaces of your skin, including the wrist, palms, backs of your hands, fingers and fingernails. Wash your hands for at least 15 to 20 seconds.
- Rinse your hands thoroughly.
- Dry your hands. Use your paper towel to turn off the water after you have finished.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Use enough gel to keep your hands wet for 30 seconds; rub your hands together until the gel is dry.
- You don't need to use water; the alcohol in the gel kills the germs on your hands.

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SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in a wastebasket and empty it often.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, if you don't have a tissue.
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick.
- If you get the flu, stay home. Don't go to work, school or social gatherings.

THINK YOU HAVE THE FLU

If you develop flu-like symptoms or a fever, especially if you are at a high risk for complications of the flu, consult your healthcare provider. Those at high risk for server complications include people over 65-years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women and young children.

PROTECT YOUSELF AND OTHERS

When pandemic flu strikes your community, take the temperature of every member of your household on a daily basis. Keep track of these temperature measurements. One of the earliest signs of flu infection is a high fever (over 101⁰ F).

Flu viruses are most commonly transmitted through exposure to an infected person's coughing or sneezing. Masks might reduce your risk from pandemic flu when combined with other personal protection efforts.

- If you have a mask, wear it when you leave home when pandemic flu is in your community.
- Those who have the flu should wear a mask when in contact with others who do not have the flu.
- If you buy mask, an N-95 mask may provide better protection.
- The mask should fit, per the manufacturer's recommendations. Most masks will not fit small children.
- Masks lose their protective properties and must be changed when they become wet from saliva or respiratory secretions.
- Never wash or disinfect a mask.
- Never share a mask with others.

KNOW THE FACTS

Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. If a pandemic occurs, having accurate and reliable information will be critical.

Visit www.pandemicflu.gov for general information on the pandemic flu.

Another source for information on the pandemic flu is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/ – Hotline 800-232-4636. Questions for the CDC can also be emailed to cdcinfo@cdc.gov .