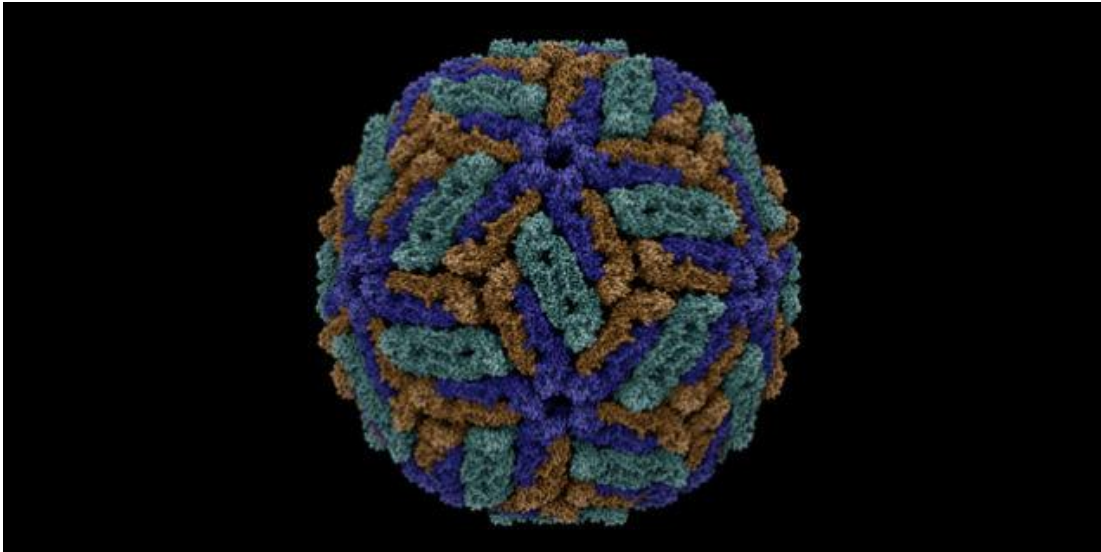


EPIDEMICS SURVIVAL



What is a pandemic?

A pandemic is a global outbreak of an infectious disease. A pandemic of influenza A (ex: the H5N1 strain) occurs when a new influenza strain emerges for which people have little or no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. The infection spreads easily from person to person, causes serious disease, and can spread around the world in a very short time.

Healthy Habits and Virus Prevention

The main responsibility for effective infection control rests on the contribution of each individual toward reducing the spread of the virus. This means staying vigilant in regard to your own health through proper hand and respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, and social distancing, and staying at home if you're ill. This also means educating others about how to care for themselves and their community.

Basic infection control procedures:

Clean hands frequently and thoroughly using soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs.

- This should take at least 20 seconds, or the time it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice.
- Alcohol-based hand rubs are effective against influenza virus and are not as drying as soap and water. They can be used effectively unless your hands are visibly soiled.
- Remember to clean your hands before preparing or serving food, brushing or flossing teeth, inserting or removing contact lenses, or treating wounds and cuts.
- Clean your hands after any contact with potentially infectious individuals, coughing and sneezing, using the bathroom, caring for a sick person, after taking off masks and gloves, or taking out the garbage.

Cover your coughs and sneezes and ask others to do so as well.

- Use a tissue, or cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- Wash hands after sneezing/coughing, and dispose of the tissue in a waste basket.

Keep living and work areas surfaces clean.

- Use regular disinfectant to frequently clean commonly used surfaces, such as the TV remote, doorknobs, telephones, and kitchen and bathroom counters. You can also use bleach (1 cup bleach + 1 gallon water).

- Wash dishes with soap and warm water.

Practice social distancing.

- If you or anyone in your home is ill, or if you may have been exposed to an ill person, stay at home and isolate yourself as much as possible.
- Stay in a separate room with good light and ventilation.
- Assign one person to care for the sick to minimize spread.
- Avoid crowds and public gatherings.
- Don't send sick children to school or daycare.
- Wear gloves and a mask when in contact with sick persons.

Depending on proximity, a respirator may be used.

- If masks aren't available, you can use layers of cloth to reduce droplet transmission.
- If gloves aren't available, you can use household rubber gloves that have been disinfected using bleach and water (1 part bleach to 10 parts water).

Did you know there is a **scientific method for washing your hands?**

According to the CDC, hand washing is the “most important means of preventing the spread of infection.” Here's how to wash them well

and perhaps avoid a cold or the flu. As we mentioned before, wash your hands for 20 seconds or the time it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice.

Instructions:

- Step 1: Turn on the sink and get your hands wet with warm water.
- Step 2: Use plenty of soap and rub hands together vigorously for at least 10 seconds.
- Step 3: Wash palms, backs of hands, wrists, fingers and under fingernails.
- Step 4: Rinse hands thoroughly with warm water.
- Step 5: Dry hands with a clean towel or paper towel.
- Step 6: Turn off the sink with the towel - this prevents reinfection of your hands.

General Ways to Prepare

Involve your community

Talk to groups you're involved with, such as religious organizations, parent groups, clubs, and other social groups about their level of preparedness. Exchange notes and ideas. Talk to your neighbors and consider creating "block teams" to organize neighborhood

preparation and response. Do your best to help form a cohesive group that you could rely on in the event of a pandemic.

Involve your family

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.

For family members living far away, consider preparing an emergency travel bag that would include an open, round-trip bus, train or airline ticket, money, a change of clothes and essential toiletries, along with a picture ID.

Involve your children in the planning process and make it a family activity. Remember, children echo your behavior so be a good model. Be sure to include games and activities for yourself and your children should you be required to stay at home for long periods of time.

Get your seasonal influenza and pneumonia vaccination

Even though the influenza vaccine does not include protection against avian influenza, be sure to get an influenza shot anyway. If you have the influenza shot, it will protect you against the seasonal

influenza and prevent you from developing it during the same time that pandemic influenza may be circulating in your community. Talk to your doctor about also getting the pneumonia vaccination – this could help prevent secondary bacterial infections that can occur from having the flu.

Stockpiling for Home

Store 1–3 months of non-perishable food for every family member
In the event of a pandemic you should be prepared to live without normal access to grocery stores and pharmacies. Prepare by:

- Selecting foods that do not require refrigeration, preparation (including water), or cooking. Foods like canned meats and fish, beans, soups, fruits, dry cereal or granola, baby food, and salt and sugar are good choices. Don't forget pet food.
- Having materials for oral rehydration solution (e.g., salt, sugar, instant baby rice cereal for example) with Pedialyte for kids, Gatorade for adults and teens, or any other generic electrolyte solution.
- Providing rehydration solution for adults and teens.

- Having a supply of formulas for infants and other person's special nutritional needs.
- Storing a one-month supply of fresh water for each family member. Plan to use one to two gallons per person per day.
- Storing a month's supply of food for pets.
- Ensuring that you have necessary medical supplies (e.g., glucose, insulin, and blood pressure monitoring equipment) if you have a chronic disease condition.
- Talking to your healthcare provider to ensure adequate access to your medications and obtain an extra month's worth of prescription medicines.

Other items in your pandemic flu emergency kit

- Disinfectants and chlorine bleach
- Supply of surgical face masks and plastic gloves; these can help protect you, especially if you are taking care of family members or need to go out in public

- Supply of ibuprofen, acetaminophen, and cough medicine for each person in the house for fever and pain
- Cell phone and charger
- Water purifier/purification tablets

A Glimpse of Life During a Pandemic

Routine services may be disrupted

- Hospitals, schools, government offices, and the post office may all be closed or severely impaired
- Telephone service, the Internet, commercial radio, and TV broadcasts could also be interrupted, especially if the electric power grid falters or fails
- Stores and businesses may be closed or, if open, may have limited supplies
- Local ATMs and banks may be shut down, and cash will be in short supply

You, your family and your local community will need to be able to function independently during this period of time. One area of self-sustainability will be in managing influenza issues at home for your family and local community members who are unable to care for

themselves (for example, medically vulnerable children, the elderly, pregnant women, and the immune-compromised).

Public transportation services and communication may be disrupted

- Gasoline supplies may be limited or unavailable
- Travel could be restricted by fear, quarantine or curfew
- Public gatherings may be canceled
- Communications about pandemic status may be limited due to changing circumstances and limited communication services

Mental health impact

- People in your community may be dying from the influenza virus. In fact, perhaps even people within your household.
- Anxiety, confusion, and fear will be commonplace and debilitating. Few people have ever had to face such circumstances.

Helpful hints for managing influenza at home

Diagnoses, treating physician, medications, and treatment schedules

- Have a medical history available for every person in your household.

- Designate one person as the caregiver.

Keep unexposed visitors out of the house if there are persons inside the house who pose a threat of influenza infection to them.

Monitor exposed persons for signs of illness.

If exposed persons become ill, do what you can to arrange for immediate medical evaluation.

- Those with symptoms should be isolated inside the house.
- If asymptomatic, but exposed to the sick, best practice would be to stay inside.

Over-the-counter (OTC) Medications

- To prevent adverse reactions or to avoid extra medication that will have little or no effect, use an OTC remedy that treats only one symptom and/or has only one active ingredient.
- If you are taking more than one medication at a time, check the labels to avoid taking the same ingredient twice.
- Try regular strength products before using extra strength.

- Follow instructions on the label. Note possible side effects as well as the drug or health conditions when the medication should not be used.
- Check the expiration date on medications in your home. Take outdated medications to a pharmacy for disposal. Do not flush them or pour them down sinks.
- Keep all medications out of the reach of children.

How to treat specific influenza symptoms in adults

Muscle pain and fever:

- Acetaminophen is the best choice for older adults (i.e., Tylenol®). Note that if you take acetaminophen for a long time or in high doses, it can affect the liver and kidneys.
- Ibuprofen (i.e., Advil® or Motrin®)- Note: ibuprofen can irritate the stomach.

Cough:

Try a medication with Dextromethorphan(DM) for a dry cough that prevents you from sleeping or causes chest discomfort. Delsym® and Benylin-Dry Cough® contain DM (without other ingredients).

Stuffy nose:

Use a decongestant. Nose drops or sprays act quickly and have fewer side effects than oral medications. They should be used only for two to three days to avoid rebound congestion. If stuffy nose continues, consider an oral medication such as pseudoephedrine. Decongestants may cause dry mouth, sleep problems, rapid heartbeat, or other side effects.

People who have long-term health problems, or who are on other medications, should not take decongestants until they talk to a healthcare provider.

Sore throat:

Try cough drops or throat sprays. Dyclonine (for example Sucrets®) works best to numb the throat.

Products containing honey, herbs or pectin soothe the throat.

How to treat specific influenza symptoms in children

Treat influenza symptoms in children with OTC medications only if necessary. Based on recent information these medications may have serious risks in young children.

Muscle pain and fever:

Acetaminophen (i.e., Tylenol®) is best. You may try ibuprofen (for example, Motrin®) instead, but do not use it for babies less than four months old. Take the child's temperature before giving medication for fever. Do not wake a child to give the medication.

Children under 18 months should NOT take acetylsalicylic acid (ASA), e.g., Aspirin® or any products containing ASA. Combined with influenza, ASA can cause Reye's Syndrome, a very serious condition affecting the nervous system and liver.

Cough:

Use a cough suppressant (DM) for a dry cough in children over two years of age, but only if the cough is disturbing the child's sleep. Do not use DM for a moist cough or for children with asthma.

Stuffy nose:

Saline nose drops, such as Salinex®, may help a stuffy nose and cough. You may use decongestant sprays for children older than six months. Other medications may require opinions from a healthcare provider.

Sore throat:

Cough drops or a warm salt water gargle may help children older than six years of age.

Other measures to reduce symptoms

- Steam bath using a pot of hot water and a few of eucalyptus oil to help clear congestion
- Use of a humidifier
- Warm salt water as a gargle for soothing sore throat.

The Importance of Hydration

People with pandemic influenza are at high risk of becoming dehydrated, so maintaining adequate intake of liquids is a critically important function for caregivers.

Symptoms and signs of dehydration

- Weakness
- Headache
- Fainting
- Dry mouth
- Dry skin
- Thirst

- Decreased alertness and change in consciousness
- Decreased urine output
- Dark-colored urine
- A rapid increase in heart rate upon rising to a sitting or standing position

Preventing dehydration

It is possible that potable (safe-to-drink) water supplies may be in short supply or not available in a disaster, so you may need to purify the water. Here's how:

Purifying water

You can purify water for drinking, cooking and medical use with any of these methods:

- Heat water to a rolling boil for one minute.
- Use water purification tablets.
- Add 8 drops of unscented liquid bleach per gallon of water (16 drops if the water is cloudy). Let the bleach/water solution stand for 30 minutes. Note that if the solution does not smell or taste of bleach, add another 6 drops of bleach and let the solution stand for 15 minutes before using.

Diet Recommendations

A clear liquid diet is used to treat certain intestinal diseases, especially infectious diarrhea (a common symptom of influenza). Patients suffering from diarrheal illnesses often experience abdominal cramping and frequent, loose stools if they eat solid foods. In addition, a great deal of water and minerals (sodium, chloride and potassium) are lost in the watery portion of the diarrheal stool.

If you are not careful this can lead to dehydration.

Patients with diarrhea have to drink much more fluid than usual to prevent dehydration. This is especially important if the patient also has a fever; fever alone leads to increased loss of body water through the skin as perspiration.

Treating diarrhea

In most cases, patients with diarrhea can tolerate a clear liquid diet without cramping or more diarrhea.

This is because the small intestine can absorb water, minerals and sugars fairly well even when infected.

The diet starts off with clear liquids only. As symptoms subside, simple-to-digest, low-residue foods such as those described next are slowly added one step at a time. Don't advance to the next step until the patient is completely symptom-free in the current step. If the cramps and diarrhea return as the patient progresses through each step, drop back to the previous step that they tolerated.

This same Clear Liquid Diet approach is the one to use for patients who have been ill with the flu and have been too ill to eat. They will have been on Step 1 already to replenish fluids, so when they become hungry, progress to Step 2 and advance them through the rest of the steps as described in the next column.

Conclusion

Now that you know about the consequences of pandemic influenza, it is clear that individuals and families can help to educate others to limit the impact pandemic influenza may have on our communities.

No one can predict when the next pandemic influenza will occur, nor what severity or strain it will be. When one does (and all authorities agree that one will occur in the future), you can be prepared to respond to the threat. It is important to make connections in your

community and spread awareness about pandemic influenza. In the end, it will be each individual's responsibility to plan for, and respond to, a pandemic influenza outbreak.

The responsibility for responding to this type of disaster cannot be placed on the shoulders of our emergency personnel. With attention to the preparedness described in this Guide, you will play an integral role in keeping yourself as safe and healthy as possible, avoiding becoming a victim yourself.