

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA:

What You Can Do to Prepare and Protect Yourself

An influenza, or flu, pandemic happens when a new flu virus appears that spreads easily from person-to-person and around the world. While we cannot predict if and when a pandemic might happen – or what its impact might be – there are things we can all do to prepare.

Although in some ways pandemic flu would be unlike other disasters or emergencies we've faced, what you can do to prepare is similar to how you plan for other emergencies and natural disasters. However, because a pandemic will happen almost everywhere at nearly the same time, few communities will have resources to spare. That's why it's so important to learn more about this unique public health threat, take steps to prepare, and adopt good health habits that will help you protect yourself.



SEASONAL FLU VS. PANDEMIC FLU:

What's the Difference?

	Seasonal Flu	Pandemic Flu
Description	Seasonal flu is caused by influenza viruses that are similar to those already affecting people. Flu shots are available every year to protect against seasonal flu.	Pandemic flu is caused by a new influenza virus that people have not been exposed to before. Flu shots might not be available during the beginning of the pandemic because large amounts of vaccine cannot be made until experts know what the virus looks like.
Symptoms	Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, headache, and muscle pain.	Symptoms will be similar to the regular flu, but may be more severe and complications could be more serious.
	<p>Healthy adults are usually not at risk for serious complications.</p> <p>The very young, the elderly, and people with serious health conditions are at increased risk for serious complications, such as pneumonia or even death.</p> <p>The more common flu that spreads each winter generally causes a modest impact on society, for example, some schools are closed and sick people are encouraged to stay home.</p>	<p>Healthy adults may face a higher risk for serious complications.</p> <p>It is not possible to prevent or stop a pandemic flu once it begins spreading. Infected people can spread the disease from one day prior to the onset of symptoms to about five days after onset. This makes it extremely easy for the virus to spread rapidly.</p> <p>A severe pandemic could change daily life for some time. People may choose to stay home or be forced to stay home if they are sick or need to care for others. Travel and public gatherings could be limited. Basic services and access to supplies could be disrupted.</p>

PREPARE - THREE STEPS TO TAKE NOW!



Talk with Family Members

Think about health issues that could affect you and your family during a pandemic. Consider what you will need to care for loved ones in your home for an extended period of time.



Store Food and Water

Store at least a two-week supply of drinking water and non-perishable food. Include food that doesn't need refrigeration, preparation (including the use of water), or cooking. Plan on one gallon of water per person per day stored in plastic containers.



Create a Medical Supply Kit

Have an extra supply of prescription drugs on hand for all family members. Make sure you also have a supply of nonprescription drugs and other health supplies, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, vitamins, and first aid materials.



PROTECT YOURSELF!

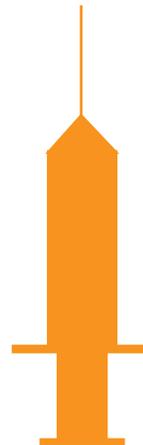
A pandemic strain of the flu is spread just like seasonal flu – through droplets from coughs and sneezes. In fact, one case of influenza can spread to several people, even to healthy adults. You can take common-sense steps now to limit the spread of the flu. Follow these three simple rules:

- 1 Stay home when you're sick.**
- 2 Cover your coughs with a tissue or your elbow.**
- 3 Wash your hands or use alcohol-based sanitizer.**

WHO SHOULD GET A FLU SHOT?

Flu season starts in the winter months and continues through spring. It is recommended that everyone get the influenza vaccine, however certain people are at risk for developing severe illness or complications from influenza and are strongly encouraged to get the influenza vaccine every year. These groups include the following:

- Person two years and older with chronic health conditions (e.g. heart and lung disease, asthma, diabetes, etc)
- Residents of long-term care facilities
- Persons over 50 years old, especially those over age 65
- Children age 6-23 months
- Pregnant women
- Health-care personnel who provide direct patient care
- Household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of



LEARN MORE!

For more information on pandemic flu, visit the following websites.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

www.pandemicflu.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

Michigan Department of Community Health

www.michigan.gov/prepare

Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services

www.kalcounty.com/pandemic



Location: 3299 Gull Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49048

Mailing Address: PO Box 42
Nazareth, MI 49074-0042

Phone: 269-373-5200
Fax: 269-373-5363
Web: www.kalcounty.com/hcs
Email: PIO@kalcounty.com

Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department programs are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or disability.

FAMILY EMERGENCY HEALTH PLAN



Fill in information for each family member in the space provided, or create your own chart with family health information. (This information sheet can also be used for other emergencies.)

Family Member	Allergies	Medications/Dosages	Special Medical Conditions

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Local personal emergency contact:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Out-of-town personal emergency contact:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Family physician(s):

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Pharmacy:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Nearest hospital:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Health insurance company:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Member/subscriber/and group numbers:

Employer emergency contact information:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

School emergency contact information:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□

Veterinarian:

_____ □□□□ - □□□□ - □□□□□□