PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

A Guide

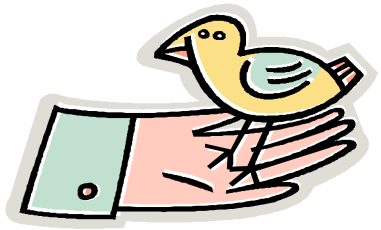
From Your
WV Northern
Panhandle Health
Departments

WHAT IS PANDEMIC INFLUENZA?

Influenza is a viral illness that infects the respiratory system, including the lungs. It spreads easily from person to person. To prepare for each flu season, manufacturers develop a vaccine that provides some protection against influenza viruses we see every year known as seasonal flu. Still, seasonal flu results in thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in the US each year. A worldwide outbreak of influenza called a pandemic, can occur when a new influenza virus emerges. People would have little or no immunity, and a vaccine would not be available for some time. Influenza pandemics have occurred three times in the past 100 years: 1918, 1957 and 1968. During the 1918 pandemic, more than 20 million people died worldwide with 500,000 deaths in the US and over 11,000 deaths in WV.

Currently, avian influenza—or bird flu—is a big concern. Although avian influenza primarily infects birds, it can be passed to humans through direct and extended contact, such as handling an infected bird. The virus does not spread easily between people, although that could change. If that happens, it could lead to a pandemic. There have been avian influenza outbreaks in domesticated birds in parts of Asia and Europe, and cases of humans infected through close contact with infected birds. So far, no people have been infected in the US. One way or another, everyone would be affected by a massive influenza outbreak. Pandemic influenza could kill hundreds of thousands of Americans. Emergency response resources could be overwhelmed as pandemic influenza spreads across the country. Up to 35 percent of the population could require special medical care. Limiting death and illness will require a coordinated effort involving international, federal, state and local agencies.

VACCINES AND ANTI-VIRAL MEDICINES ARE ONLY ONE LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST INFLUENZA AND SHOULDN'T BE CONSIDERED A "CURE-ALL".



HAVE QUESTIONS? NEED HELP? CALL YOUR WV NORTHERN PANHANDLE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS FOR MORE INFORMATION.

BROOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.
COURTHOUSE
632 MAIN STREET
WELLSBURG, WV 26070
(304) 737-3665
brookelhd@wvdhhr.org
Monday thru Friday—9:00am to 5:00pm

HANCOCK COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.
102 COURT STREET
NEW CUMBERLAND, WV 26047
(304) 564-3343
hancocklhd@wvdhhr.org
Monday thru Friday—8:00am to 4:00pm

MARSHALL COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.
6TH STREET AND COURT AVENUE
MOUNDSVILLE, WV 26041
(304) 845-7840
marshalllhd@wvdhhr.org
Monday thru Friday—8:30am to 4:30pm

WETZEL –TYLER HEALTH DEPT.
425 SOUTH FOURTH AVENUE
PADEN CITY, WV 26159
(304) 337-2001
wetzeltylerlhd@wvdhhr.org
Monday thru Friday—8:30am to 4:30pm

WHEELING-OHIO COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.
1500 CHAPLINE STREET
ROOM 106
WHEELING, WV 26003
(304) 234-3682
ohiolhd@wvdhhr.org
Monday thru Friday—8:30am to 4:30pm

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

WV Bureau of Public Health—www.wvdhhr.org/bph
West Virginia Office of Emergency Management - www.wvs.state.wv.us/dmaps
West Virginia Pandemic Flu Planning—www.wvflu.org
Northern Panhandle Medical Reserve Corps - www.pmrc.com
Community Alert Online—www.communityalertonline.com
USA Official Pandemic Influenza Site— www.pandemicflu.gov
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - www.cdc.gov
World Health Organization — www.who.int
Federal Emergency Management Agency—www.fema.gov
Department of Homeland Security—Are you Ready - www.ready.gov
American Red Cross—www.redcross.org
OSHA—www.osha.gov/dsg/guidance/avian-flu.html
Healthy Americans—healthyamericans.org/reports/flu/
Center for Infections Disease—www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/avianflu/index
Influenza Info—www.niaid.nih.gov/factsheets/fludrugs.htm
Pandemic Planning Toolkit—www.pandemicplanningtoolkit.com

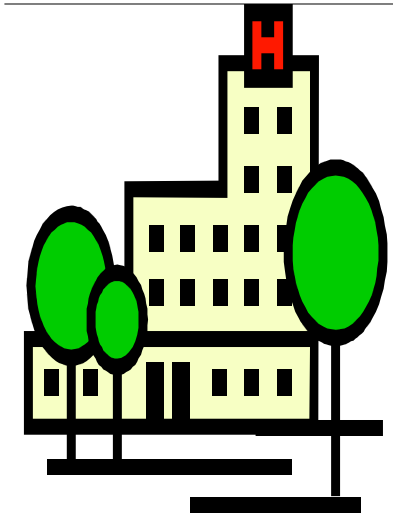
Centers for Disease control and Prevention Public Response Hotline (CDC)

- Public Response hotline (CDC)
- English (888) 246-2675
- Espanol (888) 246-2857
- TTY (866) 874-2646

Emergency Preparedness and Response Web site - http://www.bt.cdc.gov/

Mail inquiries :
Public Inquiry c/o BPRP
Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Planning
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mailstop C-18
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333

For more information, visit www.bt.cdc.gov or call the CDC Public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Espanol), or (866) 874-2646 TTY



EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Hospitals and Health Care

A pandemic would likely strain the capacity of hospitals and other health care providers. Major issues include:

- Increased outpatient visits
- Increased hospital admissions
- Demand for intensive care and isolation facilities
- Staff and resource shortages

Public health agencies are working with health care providers to plan for massive increases in hospital admissions and the need for health care services. That work includes plans for addressing staff and equipment shortages and identifying facilities to help when hospitals are over capacity.

Disease Control and Containment

Influenza virus is spread from person to person through close contact by droplets produced when an ill person sneezes or coughs. Early in a pandemic, isolating people who are sick is one approach that may be used to help slow the spread of the flu.

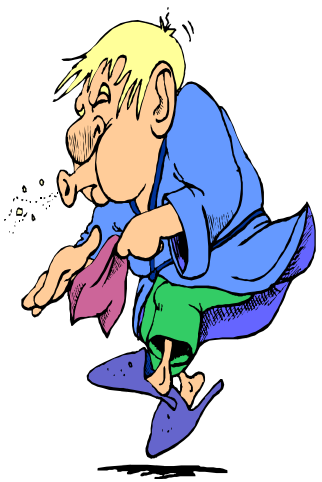
EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES (Cont'd)

Disease Control and Containment

It may also be necessary to check international travelers for illness or impose travel restrictions. Public health agencies may also discourage people from gathering in large groups—a step called social distancing. Local health departments will collaborate with local health agencies to monitor influenza conditions, provide guidance and technical assistance and develop plans for social distancing measures to decrease the spread of disease. Local health agencies have primary responsibility for controlling and preventing infection in their communities. Measures to do this would include:

ISOLATION:
For people who are ill.
Isolation involves separating people who have contagious disease from those who are healthy. It includes restricting their movement to stop the spread of that illness.

QUARANTINE:
For people who have been exposed but are not ill.
Quarantine involves separating and restricting the movement of people who while not yet ill, have been exposed to an infectious disease and may become ill and spread it to others.



- Separating well people from people who are sick or who may have been exposed to the virus.
- Discouraging or canceling large indoor gatherings.
- Closing schools— The local health officer has the authority to close schools and would do so in consultation with the Board of Health, local government officials, and the school district.

HOW DOES SEASONAL FLU DIFFER FROM PANDEMIC FLU?

Seasonal Flu	**Pandemic Flu**
Outbreaks follow predictable seasonal patterns; occurs annually, usually in winter, in temperate climates	Occurs rarely (three times in 20th century—most recently in 1968)
Usually some immunity built up from previous exposure	No previous exposure; little or no preexisting immunity
Healthy adults usually not at risk for serious complications; the young, the elderly and those with certain underlying health conditions at increased risk for serious complications	Healthy people may be at increased risk for serious complications
Health systems can usually meet public and patient needs	Health systems may be overwhelmed
Vaccine developed based on known flu strains and available for annual flu season	Vaccine probably would not be available in the early stages of a pandemic
Adequate supplies of antivirals are usually available	Effective antivirals may be in limited supply
Average US deaths approximately 36,000/year	Number of deaths could be high
Symptoms: fever, cough, runny nose, muscle pain. Deaths often caused by complications, such as pneumonia	Symptoms may be more severe and complications more frequent
Generally causes modest impact on society (eg., some school closings, encouraging people who are sick to stay home)	May cause major impact on society (eg., widespread restrictions on travel, closing of schools and businesses, cancellation of large public gatherings
Manageable impact on domestic and world economy	Potential for severe impact on domestic and world economy

SOME PANDEMIC PLANNING TOOLKIT FACTS

WHAT IS SEASONAL FLU?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza type A or type B viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness and at times can be fatal. The best way to prevent this illness is by getting a flu vaccination (flu shot) each fall.

Each year in the United States, seasonal flu imposes a heavy burden on society.

- About 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized with flu complications
- About 36,000 people die of flu complications

COMMON SYMPTOMS IN ADULTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN:

	IN ADULTS	IN CHILDREN
SYMPTOMS	Fever (usually high)	Vomiting
	Headache	Diarrhea
	Extreme Fatigue	
	Muscle Aches	
	Dry Cough	
	Sore Throat	
	Stuffy Nose	
COMPLICATIONS	Bacterial Pneumonia	Sinus Problems
	Dehydration	Ear Infections
	Worsening of chronic medical conditions (congestive heart failure, asthma, diabetes)	

STAY HEALTHY—BE PREPARED

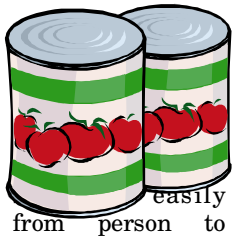
KEEP GERMS TO YOURSELF

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Throw used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose or coughing, after touching used tissues or after using the restroom.
- Always use warm water and soap if available. If you can't use water and soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are a good alternative to clean your hands.
- Try to stay home if you have a cough and fever.
- Call your health care provider as soon as you can if you have a cough and high fever. Follow their instructions, including taking medicine as prescribed and getting lots of rest.
- If asked, use face masks provided in your health care provider's office or clinic waiting room and follow other instructions to help stop the spread of germs.
- Don't share things like towels, lipstick, toys or anything else that might be contaminated with respiratory germs.
- Don't share food, utensils or beverage containers with others.
- Wash your hands often.
- Get your annual flu shot to protect against seasonal influenza.

KEEP THESE ITEMS IN YOUR HOME FOR EMERGENCIES

- **Food and water**
  Have enough to last a week or more. Choose foods that do not require refrigeration or cooking. Be sure to include a manual can opener. Flu causes dehydration; have extra water and fruit juices on hand in case someone is sick.
- **Medications and equipment**
  Have a week's supply of medicines you take regularly and a digital thermometer.
- **Items to relieve flu symptoms**
  Have medicines for fever on hand, such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen along with cold packs and blankets.
- **Items for personal comfort**
  Have a supply of soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper and cleaning products.

- **Activities for yourself and your children**
  Have some things to do that don't require electricity, such as crafts, board games and books to read.
- **Cash**
  Banks may not always be open and cash machines may not always work.
- **Pet supplies**
  Pets will need food, water, litter and other supplies.
- **Cellular phone or wired land-line phone**
  Cordless phones will not work when power is out.
- **Large trash bags**
  Garbage service may be disrupted or postponed for many days.



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FLU FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW
(Continued)

What are the symptoms of the flu vs. the symptoms of a cold?

In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder than the flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections or hospitalizations.

What are influenza antiviral medications?

Influenza antiviral medications are drugs that suppress the ability of influenza viruses to reproduce. When used correctly, they can reduce the duration of symptoms and some complications from influenza virus infection.

At what age should a child be vaccinated?

To protect their health, all children six months to 23 months old should be vaccinated against the flu. Children two years old or older who have an underlying, long-term illness (such as heart or lung disease, like asthma); metabolic disease, like diabetes; kidney disease; a blood disorder, or a weakened immune system, should get a flu shot. The flu shot is not approved for use in children less than 6 months old.

What can I do to protect myself against the flu?

By far, the single best way to prevent the flu is for individuals, especially people at high risk for serious complications from the flu to get a vaccination each fall. Other good health habits such as avoiding contact with people who are sick; staying home from work, school and errands when you are sick; covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; washing your hands often to help protect you from germs, and avoiding touching your nose, eyes or mouth.

FLU FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

How does the flu spread?

The main way that influenza viruses are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. (This is called droplet spread.) This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled (generally up to three feet) through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

Influenza is a respiratory illness. Symptoms of flu include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Children can have additional gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, but these symptoms are uncommon in adults. Although the stomach flu is sometimes used to describe vomiting, nausea or diarrhea, these illnesses are caused by certain other viruses, bacteria or possibly parasites, and are rarely related to influenza.

How long is a person with the flu virus contagious?

The period when an infected person is contagious depends on the age and health of the person. Studies show that most healthy adults may be able to infect others from one day prior to becoming sick and for five days after they first develop symptoms. Some young children or people with weakened immune systems may be contagious for longer than a week.

How can you tell the difference between a cold and the flu?

Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult (or even impossible) to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can be carried out, when needed, to tell if a person has the actual flu.

FACTS ABOUT SHELTERING IN PLACE

What "Sheltering in Place" means

Some kinds of accidents or attacks may make going outdoors dangerous. Leaving the area might take too long or put you in harms way. In such a case it may be safer for you to stay indoors than to go outside.

"Shelter in Place" means to make a shelter out of the place you are in. It is a way for you to make the building as safe as possible to protect yourself. Every emergency is different and during any emergency, people may have to evacuate or to shelter in place depending upon where they live.

How to Prepare to Shelter in Place

In the case of an influenza pandemic, your home may be used as a shelter from exposure to others who may be infected. The following items would be good to have in your shelter room: First aid kit; flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries for both; a working telephone; food and bottled water; duct tape and scissors; towels and plastic sheeting.

How to know if you need to shelter in place

If there is a "code red" or "severe" terror alert, you should pay attention to radio and television broadcasts. You will hear from local police, emergency coordinators, local health department or government on the radio and on television emergency broadcast system if you need to shelter in place. Follow the instructions of emergency coordinators.

How you can get more information about sheltering in place

- State and local health departments (http://www.cdc.gov/other.htm#states)
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Website (http://www.bt.cdc.gov/)

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Here are some simple tips that will help keep respiratory infections and many other contagious diseases from spreading, especially during the cough, cold and "flu" season.

Respiratory infections affect the nose, throat and lungs; they include influenza (the "flu"), colds, pertussis (whooping cough) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). The germs (viruses and bacteria) that cause these infections are spread from person-to-person in droplets from the nose, throat and lungs of someone who is sick.

You can help stop the spread of these germs by practicing "respiratory etiquette," or good health manners. Cover your nose and mouth every time you sneeze, cough or blow your nose; put used tissues in the trash; wash your hands well and often whenever you or someone you are close to is sick. If you have a fever, cough or rash, clinics and hospitals may give you a face mask to wear in waiting areas and exam rooms, so be prepared.

Here are some tips to help prevent spreading your germs to others, and to avoid catching someone else's germs.

Keep your germs to yourself:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Throw out used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose, or coughing, or after touching used tissues or handkerchiefs. Wash hands often if you are sick.
- Use warm water and soap or alcohol-based hand sanitizers to wash your hands.
- Try to stay home if you have a cough and fever.
- See your doctor as soon as you can if you have a cough and fever, and follow their instructions. Take medicine as prescribed and get lots of rest.
- If asked to, use face masks provided in your doctor's office or clinic's waiting room; follow their instructions to help stop the spread of germs.

Keep the germs away:

- Wash your hands before eating, or touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

volunteers and better accommodate busy schedules. Most information relating to MRC is relayed via e-mail or newsletters instead of meetings.

Who can join and volunteer with MRC?

- Anyone can including: physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, epidemiologists, radiologists, medical assistants, medical administrative personnel, medical students, nursing students, interpreters, chaplains, office workers, legal advisors or citizens willing to support their local public health and emergency medical systems. Retired medical professionals are also encouraged to join!

What can MRC Volunteers Do?

Support local public health programs and emergency medical services.

Enhance local public health preparedness.

Provide necessary personnel otherwise not available to support mass prophylaxis and vaccination clinics.

Assist the local health department and hospital with personnel otherwise not available for surge capacity situations.

Improve mass triage capabilities.

Train with local emergency response partners.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS WEBSITE

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS
NATIONAL PRIORITIES...MEETING LOCAL NEEDS

About the Medical Reserve Corps

■ **MRC** units are community-based and function as a way to locally organize and utilize volunteers—medical professionals and others—who want to donate their time and expertise to promote healthy living throughout the year and to prepare for and respond to emergencies. MRC volunteers supplement existing local emergency and public health resources.

■ **MRC** volunteers include medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, and epidemiologists. Other community members, such as interpreters, chaplains, office workers, and legal advisors, can fill other vital support positions.

■ **MRC** volunteers can support their community in times of emergency or disasters. This includes a flu pandemic, natural disaster, terrorist attack, mass casualty incident or in emergency preparedness activities.

Why do we need an MRC?

■ In the event of a catastrophic incident or influenza pandemic, our counties must rely on our own resources and be self sufficient. Medical and public health resources will become overwhelmed. With MRC volunteers, they can support the medical and public health system. An MRC can also assist with mass casualty and medical surge capacity situations.

In a catastrophic incident or influenza pandemic, can we rely on regional, state and federal assistance?

■ No. Regional, state and federal resources will be overwhelmed as well or unable to respond. State and federal officials have advised local officials to be ready to respond and handle catastrophic incidents and an influenza pandemic on their own. This is why having a county MRC is critical.

If I join the MRC, will I be expected to spend a lot of time attending training sessons and meetings?

■ No. Training sessions are voluntary. They are held monthly and quarterly to make them more available to MRC

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF GERMS (Cont'd)

■ Wash your hands after touching anyone else who is sneezing, coughing, blowing their nose, or whose nose is running.

■ Don't share things like cigarettes, towels, lipstick, toys, or anything else that might be contaminated with respiratory germs.

■ Don't share food, utensils or beverage containers with others.

FLU SYMPTOMS

Understanding what the typical flu symptoms are can help you figure out if you have the flu. The flu can include a sudden onset of:

- High fever
- Muscle aches and pains
- Weakness and tiredness
- Headache
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Least common flu symptoms include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea