



# Pandemic Influenza – Challenges and Preparation

As you plan, it is important to think about the challenges that you might face, particularly if a pandemic is severe. It may take time to find the answers to these challenges. The following are some situations that could be caused by a severe pandemic and possible ways to address them. A series of checklists have been prepared to help guide those efforts, to organize our national thinking and bring consistency to our efforts. You will find two checklists (Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families; Family Emergency Health Information Sheet) to help you plan on page 11. Other planning checklists can be found at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov).

## Social Disruption May Be Widespread

- ▶ Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted. These could include services provided by hospitals and other health care facilities, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, and post offices.
- ▶ Prepare backup plans in case public gatherings, such as volunteer meetings and worship services, are canceled.
- ▶ Consider how to care for people with special needs in case the services they rely on are not available.

## Being Able to Work May Be Difficult or Impossible

- ▶ Find out if you can work from home.
- ▶ Ask your employer about how business will continue during a pandemic. (A Business Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist is available at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov).)
- ▶ Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- ▶ Check with your employer or union about leave policies.

## **Schools May Be Closed for an Extended Period of Time**

- ▶ Help schools plan for pandemic influenza. Talk to the school nurse or the health center. Talk to your teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations.
- ▶ Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand. Also plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.
- ▶ Consider childcare needs.

## **Transportation Services May Be Disrupted**

- ▶ Think about how you can rely less on public transportation during a pandemic. For example, store food and other essential supplies so you can make fewer trips to the store.
- ▶ Prepare backup plans for taking care of loved ones who are far away.
- ▶ Consider other ways to get to work, or, if you can, work at home.

## **People Will Need Advice and Help at Work and Home**

- ▶ Think about what information the people in your workplace will need if you are a manager. This may include information about insurance, leave policies, working from home, possible loss of income, and when not to come to work if sick. (A Business Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist is available at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov).)
- ▶ Meet with your colleagues and make lists of things that you will need to know and what actions can be taken.
- ▶ Find volunteers who want to help people in need, such as elderly neighbors, single parents of small children, or people without the resources to get the medical help they will need.
- ▶ Identify other information resources in your community, such as mental health hotlines, public health hotlines, or electronic bulletin boards.
- ▶ Find support systems—people who are thinking about the same issues you are thinking about. Share ideas.

## Be Prepared

Stock a supply of water and food. During a pandemic you may not be able to get to a store. Even if you can get to a store, it may be out of supplies. Public waterworks services may also be interrupted. Stocking supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters. Store foods that:

- ▶ are nonperishable (will keep for a long time) and don't require refrigeration
- ▶ are easy to prepare in case you are unable to cook
- ▶ require little or no water, so you can conserve water for drinking

See page 12 for a checklist of items to have on hand for an extended stay at home.



## Stay Healthy

Take common-sense steps to limit the spread of germs. Make good hygiene a habit.

- ▶ Wash hands frequently with soap and water.
- ▶ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- ▶ Put used tissues in a waste basket.
- ▶ 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 cleaner.
- ▶ Stay at home if you are sick.

It is always a good idea to practice good health habits.

- ▶ Eat a balanced diet. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products. Also include low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans. Drink lots of water and go easy on salt, sugar, alcohol, and saturated fat.
- ▶ Exercise on a regular basis and get plenty of rest.



# Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals & Families

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. 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. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

## ***1. To plan for a pandemic:***

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- 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.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have 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 be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

## ***2. To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:***

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- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the current 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.



### 3. Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples of food and non-perishables	Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Protein or fruit bars</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dry cereal or granola</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Peanut butter or nuts</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dried Fruit</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Crackers</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Canned juices</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Canned or jarred baby food and formula</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pet food</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other nonperishable foods</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Anti-diarrheal medication</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Vitamins</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fluids with electrolytes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Cleansing agent/soap</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Batteries</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Portable radio</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers</li></ul>

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