

BASIC PERSONAL HYGIENE

Good, basic hygiene can help prevent the spread of germs, including those associated with influenza, while a strong, healthy person should be more likely to survive a bout with pandemic influenza.

- ❑ Wash your hands often, using warm water and soap.
- ❑ Try to avoid getting your unwashed hands around your mouth, nose and eyes, which allows germs to enter your body easily.
- ❑ As much as possible avoid touching things that have been touched by other people. Hand-rails, doorknobs and money are handled by lots of people and you can pick up germs easily from them. If you touch these types of things, make sure to wash your hands as soon as possible.
- ❑ When you cough or sneeze, make sure to cover your nose and mouth. If you don't have a handkerchief or a tissue, use your arm at the crook of the elbow.
- ❑ Avoid crowds or large gatherings.
- ❑ If you are sick, stay home! Unfortunately, persons who have influenza can spread it before symptoms appear, but staying away from those who are sick helps.
- ❑ Pandemic or not, don't send sick children to school or daycare.
- ❑ In a pandemic avoid close contact with others: The virus can spread through things like handshakes and in respiratory droplets from sneezing and coughing.
- ❑ Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables.
- ❑ Exercise and physical activity can build your body and make it stronger, thus increasing your chances of fighting off an influenza virus.

Also available in the personal and family preparedness series are:

Booklet:

A Guide to Preparedness

Pamphlet:

A Personal and Family Preparedness Plan

Brochures:

Preparing for a Winter Storm

Preparing for a House Fire

Preparing for a Flood

Preparing for a Thunderstorm, Lightning or Tornado

Preparing a First Aid and Supply Kit

Bird Flu: What You Should Know

Influenza and You

Preparing for an Influenza Pandemic

Pandemic Planning for Businesses

Preparing for Summer's Bugs and Insects

This brochure is a publication of the
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COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

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Preparing for an Influenza

Pandemic



Courtesy of the

Ross County

Health
DISTRICT

About Pandemic Influenza

- ▣ Avian flu, bird flu and H5N1 are three names for one virus. Because this is a new strain of influenza, many experts are predicting it could become a pandemic, which is a simultaneous worldwide outbreak of influenza.
- ▣ So far it has affected few people, but it has proven deadly to about half of those who have had it. Authorities believe most of those affected have contracted bird flu through contact with waste or blood from an infected bird.
- ▣ If it “mutates” and begins to spread successfully from person-to-person, it could trigger a pandemic.
- ▣ In the 20th Century there were three influenza pandemics: 1968-69; 1957-58; and the deadliest was the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918-19, which killed 500,000 to 700,000 people in the USA.
- ▣ During a pandemic all nations, all states and all cities could be affected, meaning resources will be stretched thin and our communities will have to rely on local assets. Hospitals, public health agencies, EMA, EMS and law enforcement agencies will be hard-pressed to handle the emergency.
- ▣ It is important for individual citizens to educate themselves on, and prepare for, a possible pandemic (or any other potential emergency).
- ▣ During a pandemic cooperation will be critical. County agencies must provide communication and guidance to its citizens, and citizens must follow directives issued by authorities and obey the law.

Pandemic Emergency Kits

Preparing an emergency kit will be very important if a pandemic strikes. Due to the number of people who might become ill, there's a chance that basic services such as electricity, water and heat may fail, and grocers may face shortages of stock.

- ▣ **Water:** If water service is disrupted, you should have a two-week supply stored. Plan for one gallon per day for each person in the household. Make sure water is stored in sealed containers or bottles.
- ▣ **Food:** At least a two-week supply of non-perishable foods (not requiring refrigeration) should be kept on-hand. Canned foods (with a non-electric can opener), soups, crackers, and granola and fruit bars are good choices.
- ▣ **Supplies:** A well-equipped first aid kit, battery powered radio, flashlights, extra batteries, a charged cell phone, matches or a lighter, personal hygiene items and baby food (if needed) are just a few items you should have on-hand.
- ▣ **Medications:** Family members should make sure prescriptions are filled (and if possible, extra amounts are on-hand).
- ▣ **Contact information:** Make sure to have emergency contact numbers of local police, fire and EMS.
- ▣ A radio (battery powered) set to a local station will get you updates, warnings and information from local authorities.
- ▣ Although no official guidance has been issued, you may want to have items such as masks, gloves, tissues, etc., which could be used in caring for sick family members.

Isolation vs. Quarantine

- ▣ **Isolation:** Persons who are already sick may be separated from other people - or put into isolation. This may take place in a hospital or a private home. During an influenza pandemic such isolations may be ordered by the Ross County Board of Health.
- ▣ **Quarantine:** People who are not ill but were exposed to influenza may be quarantined for a certain/specified amount of time. The purpose of this is to slow or stop the spread of influenza.

Public Gatherings and Schools

During a pandemic, public gatherings (such as meetings, sporting events and even church services) may be banned; malls and movie theaters may be closed; and schools and child care facilities will be closed. The decision to do this rests on the Ross County Board of Health. They are given this authority in the Ohio Revised Code, Section 3707.26.

Emergency Contact Info

Ross County Sheriff - 773.1185
Chillicothe City Police - 773.1191
Highway Patrol - 775.7770
Ross County Health District - 779.9652
Red Cross - 772.2014
Poison Control - 1.800.222.1222

LOCAL RADIO STATIONS
WKKJ - 94.3 FM
WBEX - 1490 AM
WCHI - 1350 AM