

What can I do to avoid getting sick and prevent the spread of influenza?

- ▶ If you feel sick, stay home and away from others. Symptoms range from flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches) to eye infections, pneumonia, and severe respiratory diseases. Symptoms may depend on which virus causes the infection.
- ▶ Stay away from people who are sick.
- ▶ To help stop the spread of germs,
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
 - If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
 - Put your used tissue in the waste basket.
- ▶ Clean your hands frequently, especially after coughing or sneezing.
 - Wash with soap and water.
or
 - Clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth as much as possible.
- ▶ Avoid smoking and tobacco smoke. Tobacco use has been associated with greater risk of severe complications from certain lung infections.
- ▶ Get vaccinated with the seasonal flu vaccine to decrease the risk of a compounding viral infection and possible complications.
- ▶ Get regular exercise, enough rest, and eat healthy balanced meals.
- ▶ If told to wear a mask, wear it as instructed:
 - Secure ties or bands at the middle of the head and neck
 - Fix flexible band to nose bridge
 - Fit snug to face and below chin

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Information about Influenza Pandemics
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/pandemics.htm>
- National Vaccine Program Office
<http://www.dhhs.gov/nvpo/pandemics/>
- Key Facts About Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) and Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Virus
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/facts.htm>

World Health Organization

- Avian Influenza
http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian_influenza/en/
- Avian Influenza (Western Pacific Region)
http://www.wpro.who.int/health_topics/avian_influenza/

Deployment Health Clinical Center

- <http://www.pdhealth.mil/influenza.asp>

Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy – Pandemic Influenza – Latest News

- <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/index.html>



<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/>

Pandemic Influenza Fact Sheet For Servicemembers and Families



“Action in the Face of an Uncertain Threat”

Pandemic Flu Facts

What is Pandemic Influenza?

An influenza, or flu pandemic is an outbreak of a new influenza virus that spreads rapidly around the world. Influenza viruses change constantly to produce new strains that are readily transmitted from person to person. A pandemic results when an influenza virus changes to produce a strain that is so different from earlier strains that no one is immune to it. This causes a more serious infection than the ordinary flu. Ordinary or seasonal influenza strains cause about 37,000 deaths in America each year. A pandemic flu strain is expected to cause many more deaths and hospitalizations.

Pandemics of the past 100 years

- ▶ **Spanish Flu: 1918–1919**
Worldwide, 20–40 million people died, many within the first few days of infection. Nearly half of those who died were young, healthy adults.
- ▶ **Asian Flu: 1957–1958**
One million people died around the world during this pandemic which mainly affected the very young and very old.
- ▶ **Hong Kong Flu: 1968–1969**
Globally, one to four million people died, primarily the very old and those with underlying medical conditions.



Seasonal Flu

- ▶ Occurs each winter
- ▶ Affects about 10% of the population
- ▶ For most people, it is unpleasant but not life-threatening
- ▶ The people most at risk are the very young and the very old
- ▶ A vaccine is available
- ▶ Antiviral drugs are available to treat those at special risk

Pandemic Flu

- ▶ Occurs about three times each century – at any time of the year
- ▶ May affect 50% of the population
- ▶ It is a more serious infection for everyone
- ▶ People of every age may be at risk
- ▶ A vaccine will probably not be available **at first**
- ▶ Antiviral drugs may be in limited supply and the virus may be resistant to them

Why should I learn about Pandemic Flu?

- ▶ Many scientists believe it is just a matter of time before a new pandemic occurs.
- ▶ Since 2004, a deadly avian flu virus (H5N1) has circulated among poultry in Asia. This virus has infected other animals and humans as well. About 50% of the infected humans have died.
- ▶ If the virus changes or mutates to include certain human genes, people may be able to pass it on and easily infect others.
- ▶ Since this H5N1 virus has never circulated among humans, virtually everyone will be vulnerable. Since people will have no immunity to the virus, they will be susceptible and able to quickly spread the virus unless countermeasures are taken.

What to expect if there is a Pandemic

- ▶ Although scientists are working on a vaccine, there is currently no vaccine available to protect against pandemic flu. Once the pandemic strain is identified, vaccine development and production of adequate stocks may take several months.
- ▶ Antivirals will probably be in short supply and the virus may be resistant to them. The virus may even develop resistance to an antiviral drug that works at first.

- ▶ Health care will be in great demand. The World Health Organization estimates that between 20% and 50% of the global population may be affected by the pandemic. A reduced number of healthcare providers may be available due to illness.
- ▶ A second wave of a pandemic may infect those age groups and geographical areas not affected by the first wave.

What's being done?

- ▶ To reduce human exposure, poultry with avian flu are destroyed immediately.
- ▶ Many governments and the Department of Defense have begun stockpiling antiviral medicines.
- ▶ Laboratory personnel are being trained to test for pandemic viruses.
- ▶ Scientists are conducting research to develop a new vaccine. The testing of a vaccine that may protect humans against H5N1 virus has begun.
- ▶ Surveillance systems to detect avian flu are being enhanced.
- ▶ International, national, state, and local agencies are developing plans to deal with the pandemic.