

ALCOASTpanFlu.txt

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FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//CG-1//
TO ALCOAST
BT
UNCLAS //N06200//
ALCOAST 533/05
COMDTNOTE 6200

SUBJ: PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PREVENTIVE MEDICINE GUIDANCE.

A. TECHNICAL GUIDE: PRACTICES FOR RESPIRATORY PROTECTION, COMDTINST M6260.2D B. PREVENTION OF BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN TRANSMISSION COMDTINST, M6220.8

1. THIS ALCOAST IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE GENERAL MEDICAL INFORMATION ON PANDEMIC INFLUENZA AND AVIAN INFLUENZA FOR COAST GUARD MEMBERS AND AFFILIATED CIVILIAN COMMUNITY. IT ESSENTIALLY CONTAINS THE SAME INFORMATION AS FLAG VOICE 272.

2. RECENTLY THERE HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF MEDIA REPORTING ON AVIAN INFLUENZA. AVIAN INFLUENZA IS A DISEASE OF BIRDS AND HAS NOT BEEN SHOWN TO SPREAD FROM PERSON-TO-PERSON. THUS FAR, THE AVIAN FLU VIRUS OF CONCERN, H5N1, IS ONLY KNOWN TO HAVE SPREAD TO HUMANS WHO HAD PROLONGED CONTACT WITH SICK BIRDS OR THEIR EXCREMENT. THE MAJOR CONCERN IS THAT THIS VIRUS COULD MUTATE INTO A VIRUS THAT COULD EASILY SPREAD FROM PERSON-TO-PERSON. IF THIS HAPPENS, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IT COULD CAUSE WHAT IS KNOWN AS A PANDEMIC. PANDEMIC INFLUENZA OUTBREAKS OCCUR WHEN A NEW INFLUENZA VIRUS INFECTS HUMANS WORLDWIDE AT HIGHER THAN USUAL RATES, CAUSING SERIOUS DISEASE. EVEN THOUGH IT HAS BEEN 36 YEARS SINCE THE LAST PANDEMIC, EXPERTS AT THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) AND THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AGREE THAT A PANDEMIC INFLUENZA OUTBREAK COULD OCCUR WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

3. BACKGROUND: IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS) AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD), THE COAST GUARD HAS BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH THE AVIAN AND PANDEMIC FLU ISSUES FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. BELOW ARE EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE WORK THAT IS BEING DONE:

A. ASSISTING THE DHS AVIAN INFLUENZA TASK FORCE WITH DEVELOPING A DHS RESPONSE PLAN.

B. PARTICIPATING IN THE DOD JOINT PREVENTIVE MEDICINE POLICY GROUP (JPMPG) WHICH PROVIDES MEDICAL GUIDANCE FOR THE DOD AVIAN INFLUENZA AND PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE PLANS.

C. ESTABLISHING THE COAST GUARD CONTAGIOUS DISEASE RESPONSE WORKING GROUP. THE WORKING GROUP IS REVISITING OPERATIONAL QUICK RESPONSE CARDS AND COMMANDANT INSTRUCTIONS/MANUALS RELATING TO THE COAST GUARDS INFLUENZA RESPONSE.

D. WORKING WITH THE DOD SENTINEL SITE INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE AND THE DOD FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMS. THESE PROGRAMS PROVIDE REAL-TIME SURVEILLANCE OF INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESSES AT SELECTED COAST GUARD FACILITIES.

4. ANTIVIRAL MEDICATIONS AND VACCINES: THE COAST GUARD IS CONSIDERED A TIER I AGENCY WITHIN THE DOD FRAMEWORK AND WILL BE PROVIDED ENOUGH VACCINE AND/OR ANTI-VIRAL MEDICATION FOR OUR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OPERATIONAL WORKFORCE IN THE EVENT IT IS NEEDED. DHS PLANNING INCLUDES VACCINE AND/OR ANTI-VIRAL MEDICATION FOR OUR REMAINING PERSONNEL. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EXISTING MEDICATION AGAINST AVIAN FLU IS UNKNOWN BECAUSE NO ONE KNOWS WHETHER OR HOW THE AVIAN FLU VIRUS WILL MUTATE. ONE PARTICULAR ANTI-VIRAL MEDICATION, TAMIFLU, HAS BEEN SHOWN TO BE AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR MANY FORMS OF INFLUENZA. DOD HAS ORDERED CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES OF TAMIFLU FOR PROTECTION AGAINST ANY POTENTIAL INFLUENZA OUTBREAK. ADDITIONALLY, CLINICAL TRIALS PRODUCED A VACCINE THAT IS SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE CURRENT FORM OF H5N1, BUT IT MAY OR MAY NOT PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST A MUTATED VERSION.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT: THE H5N1 VIRUS IS A LOW-LEVEL THREAT FOR THE MAJORITY OF INDIVIDUALS WHO LIVE AND WORK IN AREAS WHERE H5N1 BIRD- TO-HUMAN TRANSMISSION HAS OCCURRED. THUS FAR, THE CDC HAS NOT RECOMMENDED USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) (SUCH AS N95 RESPIRATORS, GLOVES) FOR THOSE CONSIDERED TO BE AT LOW RISK. IN THE EVENT THAT A MUTATION OF THE H5N1 VIRUS OCCURS WHICH WOULD MAKE THIS DISEASE A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO HUMANS, SPECIFIC GUIDANCE WILL BE PROVIDED VIA ALCOAST AND/OR OTHER MEANS. MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN CONTROL OR ERADICATION ACTIVITIES INVOLVING BIRDS OR WHO HAVE CONTACT WITH BIRDS INFECTED BY AVIAN INFLUENZA VIRUS NEED TO TAKE ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS. IN RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS HUMAN THREATS THE CDC RECOMMENDED

THE FOLLOWING. THIS LIST IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

A. TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO INVOLVE THE APPROPRIATE MEDICAL OFFICER TO EVALUATE RISK AND APPLY RISK MANAGEMENT.

B. DON DISPOSABLE GLOVES MADE OF LIGHTWEIGHT LATEX, NITRILE OR VINYL. REMOVE GLOVES PROMPTLY AFTER USE.

C. WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING, PREFERABLY DISPOSABLE OUTER GARMENTS AND WEAR DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE SHOE COVERS OR RUBBER OR POLYURETHANE BOOTS THAT CAN BE CLEANED AND DISINFECTED AFTER USE.

D. WEAR SAFETY GOGGLES TO PROTECT THE MUCOUS MEMBRANES OF YOUR EYES.

E. USE DISPOSABLE PARTICULATE RESPIRATORS (SUCH AS N-95). COAST GUARD MEMBERS MUST BE FIT TESTED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND KNOW HOW TO CHECK THE FACE-PIECE TO FACE SEAL. GUIDANCE/POLICY ON MAINTAINING A UNIT LEVEL RESPIRATOR PROGRAM IS PROVIDED IN REF A.

F. DISCARD ALL DISPOSABLE PPE AND DISINFECT ALL NON DISPOSABLE PPE. ALL PPE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED MEDICAL WASTE AND DISPOSED OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH REF B.

G. UTILIZE HAND HYGIENE MEASURES AFTER REMOVAL OR PPE.

6. PREVENTION: THE FOLLOWING ARE PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO GUARD AGAINST POTENTIAL INFECTION WITH ANY INFLUENZA VIRUS OR OTHER CONTAGIOUS FEBRILE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS:

A. GET YOUR ANNUAL FLU SHOT (MANDATORY FOR ALL ACTIVE DUTY COAST GUARD MEMBERS).

B. IF YOU ARE SICK, GO THROUGH YOUR APPROPRIATE CHAIN OF COMMAND AND STAY AT HOME IF POSSIBLE (CARRYING YOUR ILLNESS INTO WORK AND EXPOSING OTHERS IS NOT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COAST GUARD).

C. AVOID CLOSE CONTACT WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK.

D. CLEAN YOUR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WARM WATER OR ALCOHOL- BASED GELS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM GERMS.

E. AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH. GERMS ARE OFTEN SPREAD WHEN YOU TOUCH SOMETHING THAT IS CONTAMINATED AND THEN TOUCH YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH.

F. CONTACT A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER IF YOU DEVELOP FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS (FEVER, COUGH, SORE THROAT, MUSCLE ACHES) EVEN IF YOU HAD A FLU SHOT. BEFORE VISITING A HEALTH-CARE SETTING, INFORM THE HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ABOUT SYMPTOMS AND RECENT POSSIBLE EXPOSURES. (THIS WILL ALLOW THE CLINIC OR SICK BAY TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATE SETTING FOR THE ILL PERSON TO WAIT RATHER THAN EXPOSE OTHERS IN THE CLINIC TO A CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS).

7. ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION INCLUDE:

[HTTP://WWW.WHO.INT/CSR/DISEASE/AVIANINFLUENZA/EN/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/)

OR

[HTTP://WWW.CDC.GOV/FLU/AVIAN/GEN-INFO/PANDEMIC.S.HTM](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/pandemics.htm)

8. POCs FOR ALCOAST ARE:

A. AT MLC(K) LANT, CAPT BOQUARD 757-628-4333 B. AT MLC(K) PAC, CAPT FAJARDO 510-637-1319 C. CG-1121, LCDR SCHWARTZ 202-267-0845 9. INTERNET RELEASE IS AUTHORIZED.

10. RADM KENNETH VENUTO, ASSISTANT COMMANDANT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES, SENDS.

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