



Community Health Connections

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Fact Sheet

Pandemic Flu

Pandemic flu

An influenza pandemic is a worldwide flu outbreak. It occurs when:

- *A new strain of influenza virus emerges to which no one is immune*
- The virus causes disease in humans
- The virus is easily spread between humans

How is it spread?

In the absence of immunity, a new influenza strain can spread rapidly across the world causing a pandemic with high numbers of cases and deaths

Can we predict when a pandemic flu will happen?

No. It is extremely difficult to predict the next pandemic flu or how severe it will be.

How do we prepare for Pandemic Flu?

Because pandemics are prolonged and widespread, we would need to make changes in many areas of our lives, including school, work, transportation, and other public services.

The following are some things we can do:

- Develop preparedness plans as you would for any other emergency
- Participate and promote public health efforts in your community and state
- Become aware of the signs and symptoms related to a pandemic flu outbreak by accessing public health officials and public health information
- Implement the prevention and control actions recommended by public health officials
- Adopt business, work, and school plans that encourage the sick to stay home
- Anticipate how to function at work, school, and business with significant absenteeism due to illness and caring for ill family members
- Practice good health habits such as balanced meals, exercise, proper rest, and taking common sense steps to stop the spread of germs:
 - ✓ Wash hands frequently with soap and water
 - ✓ Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues
 - ✓ Stay away from others if you feel sick
- Stay informed about pandemic flu and be PREPARED.

For more information, visit: www.pandemicflu.gov.