

Get Prepared.



Pandemic Flu Signs and Symptoms

The exact symptoms of the next flu pandemic are unknown, but they are expected to be similar to those of the seasonal flu: fever, cough, sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, muscle aches, headaches, tiredness and stomach problems such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

If you have flu symptoms during a pandemic...

- Be responsible and stay home.
- Remember to cover your mouth and nose if you cough and sneeze, and keep your distance from others as much as possible until you are well again.
- Put used tissues in a wastebasket.
- Clean your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Drink lots of fluids and get lots of rest. It is important to prevent dehydration.
- When going to the doctor's office or emergency room, ask for a mask to reduce exposure to others.
- Check with your health care provider for medical advice (e.g. over-the counter medications to relieve flu symptoms).

When a household member is sick...

- Keep everyone's personal items separate: avoid sharing computers, pens, papers, eating utensils, food, towels, blankets or sheets.
- Try to separate well persons from sick persons.
- Wash your hands often to prevent germs from getting into your body.
- Wash hands before and after taking care of someone who is sick.
- Disinfect doorknobs, switches, handles and other surfaces that are commonly touched around the home or workplace.

During a flu pandemic, doctors' offices and hospitals will be overwhelmed with sick people. Only go if absolutely necessary. Stay in touch with your doctor for medical advice.

Take Action.

Know your family members' medical history.
Complete this form. Update every 6 months.

During a public health emergency, Public Health will issue directions about where to go for medication (if available). One person from your household may be able to pick up medications on behalf of your family. It is important to know the following information for each family member, including allergies that may affect the type of medication given.

Family member	DOB*	Weight	Allergies	Serious Medical Condition**

* DOB = Date of Birth, ** Example of a serious medical condition: autoimmune disorder

Emergency Contact List

During an emergency, you may need to ask a friend, family member or neighbor for assistance. Take a moment to list a few emergency contacts here.

Name	Phone #	Alternate phone #

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION DURING A PANDEMIC

During a pandemic, public health will provide information about disease signs and symptoms, how to protect against flu, where to get available medications and more. Please plan on listening to radio and television news broadcasts and on visiting the Cook County Department of Public Health website: www.cookcountypublichealth.org.

Build an emergency supply kit.

Gather supplies for a period of 2-4 weeks. The longer you are prepared, the better off your family will be when resources are limited or scarce.

Non-perishable foods

- Canned foods/juice
- Cereal
- Peanut butter
- Pet food (if necessary)
- Baby food (if necessary)
- Drinking water (1 gallon per person per day)

Medication

- Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen
- Prescription medications (you can typically request 3 months of medication with approval of your doctor and insurance)
- First aid kit, including a thermometer

Miscellaneous supplies

- Emergency radio
- Flashlights and batteries
- Can opener
- Hand soap and hand sanitizer
- Paper towels and toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products
- Baby supplies (if necessary)

Tips

It is difficult to purchase everything at the same time. Start with a few items per week to build up your emergency kit. Rotate your stock every 6 months so that you can use the food before the expiration date. Protect food from pests, dampness and animals.

It is NOT necessary to stockpile N95 masks. They are only recommended for healthcare workers in close contact with infectious persons. During a pandemic, Public Health will issue recommendations based on the characteristics of the virus.

Volunteer.

Join the Cook County Medical Reserve Corps

The Cook County Medical Reserve Corps (CCMRC) is an organized group of medical, non-medical and public health professionals willing to assist the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) during public health emergencies. CCDPH is the state-certified public health agency for suburban Cook County; with the exception of Evanston, Skokie, Oak Park and Stickney Township.

During times of disaster, we need to work together to ensure our citizens are protected. Volunteering is a great way to give back to the community and potentially learn new skills. We greatly appreciate your willingness to consider volunteering for the CCMRC.

To join, please follow these steps:

1. Register at www.illinoishelps.com. We will receive notification that you have registered and chosen CCDPH as your primary MRC. We will run a background check and (if you are an active medical professional) verify your credentials.
2. Go to www.cookcountypublichealth.org/how-to-get-involved/volunteer to download the CCMRC Agreement and Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Oath.
3. Complete, sign, notarize and mail forms to:
CCMRC Coordinator
Cook County Department of Public Health
Oak Forest Health Center
15900 S. Cicero Avenue, Bldg. E - 3rd Floor
Oak Forest, IL 60452
4. For any questions regarding volunteering, registration, training, etc., please email cookcountymrc@gmail.com.

Information about volunteer meetings and trainings will be sent when forms are received.



What You Need to Know About Pandemic Flu



Be Aware. Get Prepared. Take Action.
This guide contains basic information to help individuals and families prepare now for pandemic flu.

Be Aware.

Flu, or **Influenza**, is a disease that spreads easily from person-to-person through coughing and sneezing. Flu is commonly referred to as *seasonal flu*. Flu season occurs in the U.S. between October and April and can cause mild to severe illness and, at times, even death. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older receive a seasonal flu vaccine. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu.

Bird Flu is a disease in wild and farm birds. **Swine Flu** is a disease found in pigs. Both can spread to other animals, and in rare cases, to humans who have had direct contact with the infected animal. If the virus changes in ways that allows it to spread easily from person-to-person, it could cause a severe flu outbreak and potentially a flu pandemic because people would have little or no immunity to this new virus. When this occurs, it will likely sicken, and perhaps kill many more people than seasonal flu.

The 2009 H1N1 virus is a good example of a recent flu pandemic (or a global flu outbreak).



How pandemic flu is different from seasonal flu.

- With pandemic flu:
- people have little or no immunity when dealing with a new emerging virus.
 - symptoms may be more severe and complications more frequent, even among children and young adults.
 - the death rate may be higher.
 - there may be a major impact on society (e.g. travel restrictions and school closings).
 - vaccine may not be available at the start of a pandemic.
 - availability of medications for treatment may be limited or initially restricted to priority groups.
 - there may be greater fear and anxiety

The Cook County Department of Public Health has partnered with first responders such as police, fire, Emergency Medical Services, and hospitals, as well as state, federal and community leaders to plan for a pandemic. Other pandemic flu planning activities have included:

- discussing preparedness with school superintendents and nurses
- talking with businesses about the importance of planning;
- creating the Mass Care Work Group, a committee of private, public and non-profit organizations, to plan for mass care;
- continuing to work with the Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in planning for all types of public health emergencies.

Learn about pandemic flu.

Some public health experts had been anticipating the next severe flu pandemic when the 2009 H1N1 pandemic occurred. If the disease caused greater and more widespread illness and death, the capacity of public health to respond would have been extremely overwhelmed. This was a good learning experience to prepare our nation for the next severe flu outbreak or potentially a more deadly pandemic.

During the last century, three severe flu pandemics killed more than 50 million people worldwide.

NAME	YEAR	U.S. DEATHS	DEATHS WORLDWIDE
Spanish Flu	1918	500,000	50 million
Asian Flu	1957	70,000	1 to 4 million
Hong Kong Flu	1968	34,000	700,000

Thirty percent or more of the population may be unable to work during a pandemic. This could severely impact the workforce, economy and delivery of products and services needed to run our households and businesses.

Be Aware that:

- It may be difficult to get to work due to transportation issues or caring for sick family members.
- Stores may be closed or have limited supplies. (See the shopping list on the back of this brochure to build a supply kit now).
- You may need to ask your employer to consider staggering shifts, letting staff work from home, or other flexible plans.
- You could lose income if you are unable to work.
- You can visit these websites to prepare an emergency plan now: www.cookcountypublichealth.org or www.pandemicflu.gov.

What are vaccines and antivirals?

Vaccines are usually given to help prevent illness in well people who have no symptoms. It may take over 6 months before a vaccine becomes available from the time the flu virus is identified when a pandemic begins. Research is underway to develop vaccines more quickly. Once vaccines are available, quantities may initially be limited and reserved for critical staff such as health care workers or for priority groups as indicated by the disease.

- ① Listen for information on TV and radio for instructions from Public Health or your municipal leaders about where to go for vaccinations.

Antivirals are medications prescribed for treatment and reduction of flu symptoms. These medications – if given within 24-48 hours after symptoms begin – may shorten and lessen illness in those infected with the flu virus. Federal and state governments are stockpiling limited amounts of antivirals. However, it is unlikely that antivirals alone would effectively contain the spread of a pandemic, and we cannot predict whether these medications will be effective against the particular flu virus that causes the next flu pandemic.



Prevention is your best defense.



- ### Stop spreading germs!
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze.
 - Cough or sneeze into your elbow or upper arm; not your hands.
 - Always wash your hands after sneezing, blowing your nose, coughing into your hands, or touching used tissues.
 - Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth to keep germs from entering your body.

What are quarantine, isolation and social distancing?

Isolation, quarantine and social distancing may be necessary in the early weeks of a pandemic to quickly control the spread of disease.

Isolation is the separation of **ill** persons with a contagious disease (often in a hospital setting).

Quarantine is the separation of **well** persons (who may have been exposed to an illness) from others, until it can be determined if they will become ill.

Social distancing is limiting the contact between people by: avoiding public gatherings such as sports games, concerts, worship, shopping and going to movies; or standing 3 feet away from others in public or at work.

Schools **may** be closed to limit the spread of flu in the community and to help prevent children from becoming sick. How long the schools will be closed will depend on the virus, severity of the illness and the spread of the disease. Talk with your child's school officials about what plans they have in place.

- ☞ Start thinking about activities to do at home during an emergency.
- ☞ Prepare contact lists to keep in touch with loved ones.

Simple Hand-Washing Steps

For visibly dirty hands: Wash with soap and warm water for 20 seconds (sing the Happy Birthday song twice).

1. Scrub all surfaces well; even under fingernails.
2. Wash hands before eating or touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
3. Use a towel to turn off faucet after hands are clean.

For hands that are not visibly dirty: Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol).



Community Preparedness and Coordination Unit

The Community Preparedness and Coordination Unit (CPCU) coordinates public health preparedness efforts with local, state and federal partners to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies impacting the health of the public in suburban Cook County. CPCU is focused on:

- Promoting individual and family preparedness.
- Communicating and coordinating public health emergency preparedness and response.
- Building internal and external capacity and infrastructure.
- Developing and maintaining community partnerships.

Activities	Services
Planning	Pharmaceutical Stockpile Distribution Plan, Pandemic Disease Plan, Mass Vaccination Plan
Exercising	Develop, coordinate, and evaluate tabletop, functional, and full-scale exercises
Outreach	Community planning teams, educational campaigns, training, and guidance

Regional coordination: Creation of a Regional Coordination System, Health and Hospital Committee, First Responder Task Force, Mass Humanitarian Care Workgroup, Special Needs Advisory Panel, Cook County Medical Reserve Corps, and participation in regional committees



For more information, visit us online at www.cookcountypublichealth.org