

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA DISASTER RESPONSE

Background:

An influenza pandemic is an epidemic of an influenza virus that spreads on a worldwide scale and infects a large proportion of the human population. This virus could affect more people than the seasonal flu virus, with far more medical, social, and economic impacts. Pandemic flu causes more medical complications in people, including pneumonia.

Symptoms:	Treatment:	Vaccines:
Similar to seasonal flu, but usually more severe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Sore throat and cough • Fatigue and weakness • Runny nose 	Antiviral medication can be used to treat the symptoms of pandemic flu. Mild cases of pandemic flu can be treated at home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay away from others to avoid infecting them • Get plenty of rest • Drink a lot of water • Take over-the-counter medications to treat fever, cough and congestion • Do not drink alcohol or use tobacco products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal flu vaccines will not protect against pandemic flu • Scientists need to know what the new flu virus looks like before working on a vaccine • It may take several months for a vaccine to be developed once the new virus is discovered

If Pandemic Influenza Strikes:

- Stay informed for the most up-to-date information about pandemic flu.
- Make a plan that includes:
 - Child care (should schools close)
 - What you may need to care for relatives in your home
 - What to do if your workplace needs to close
- Create an emergency kit: Visit www.72hours.dc.gov to learn how.
 - Water and non-perishable food
 - First aid supplies and prescription medication
 - Contact list and important medical information
 - Radio and extra batteries
- Practice good health habits such as washing your hands regularly and coughing and sneezing into a tissue or into your upper sleeve.
- Work with your relatives, neighbors and community with their preparedness efforts.

