

## Preparing for a Pandemic

- ❖ Just as with any emergency or natural disaster, it is important to prepare for a possible flu pandemic.
- ❖ You should store supplies for your family for up to two weeks, including nonperishable food, water, medications, batteries and flashlights, a radio, and toiletries, in case stores are out of supplies.
- ❖ Continually check your prescription drugs to make sure you have a supply at home.
- ❖ Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick and what you will need to care for them in your home.
- ❖ Schools may be closed weeks or months so plan on how to educate children at home.
- ❖ Plan for if you are unable to go to work or if your place of employment is closed.
- ❖ Make a will, a living will, and review your insurance policies.

**COVER** your mouth when you cough or sneeze

**ONLY** use your own glass and utensils—don't share

**USE** soap and warm water to wash hands often

**GET** plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat a healthy diet

**HOME** is where you belong when you're sick, not at work or school

## Resources

For more information, visit the following websites:

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services  
[www.avianflu.nh.gov](http://www.avianflu.nh.gov)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
<http://www.fws.gov/>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
[www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease  
<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/focuson/flu>

World Organization for Animal Health  
[www.oie.int/eng/en\\_index.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/en_index.htm)

World Health Organization  
[www.who.int/](http://www.who.int/)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
[www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

# Seasonal, Avian, and Pandemic Flu



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## Seasonal Flu

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- ❖ Seasonal flu is a viral respiratory illness that can be transmitted from person to person through coughing, sneezing, and sharing utensils.
- ❖ In the United States, approximately 36,000 people die each year from seasonal flu.
- ❖ Seasonal flu occurs every year, though from year to year the strains differ.
- ❖ Every year a vaccine is developed to match the strains most likely to circulate. The vaccine is meant for people most likely to become very ill if they get the flu.
- ❖ Most people have at least some immunity to the strains of flu circulating that cause the seasonal flu.
- ❖ It is recommended that anyone with a chronic illness, children 6-23 months, pregnant women, people over age 50, and health care workers be vaccinated.
- ❖ Symptoms include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, runny nose, sore throat, and muscle aches.



## Avian Flu

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- ❖ Avian (or “bird”) flu is caused by the type of influenza viruses that occur naturally in wild birds. H5N1 is one of this type of virus.
- ❖ Every year there are outbreaks of various strains of avian flu in poultry in the U.S. The highly pathogenic H5N1 strain is deadly to domestic fowl, such as chickens and ducks.
- ❖ It is safe to eat poultry infected with H5N1 or other avian flu strains as long as it is handled properly and cooked thoroughly since cooking kills the virus.
- ❖ Since mid-2003, the highly pathogenic H5N1 virus has caused the largest and most severe outbreak in poultry ever recorded.
- ❖ The virus continues to change, or mutate, and several strains are now circulating in the world.
- ❖ The vast majority of avian flu strains do not infect humans.
- ❖ Since H5N1 can be transmitted from birds to humans and has a high death rate in people, scientists worry it may start a pandemic. No one knows for sure if or when this will happen.
- ❖ There is no human immunity to H5N1 and no vaccine is yet available for people.
- ❖ Symptoms of illness in people can range from cough to fever to pneumonia.
- ❖ There have been cases of limited human-to-human spread, but no sustained spread.
- ❖ There is no cure and in birds or people, but some antiviral medications may be helpful to treat the virus in people.

## Pandemic Flu

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- ❖ Influenza pandemics are recurring events. Three pandemics occurred in the twentieth century.
- ❖ Pandemics can vary in severity, but the 1918 pandemic, one of the most severe, is estimated to have killed over 50,000 Americans.
- ❖ A pandemic occurs when a new flu virus emerges and starts spreading as easily as seasonal flu—by coughing and sneezing.
- ❖ Many pandemic strains cause more serious illness than seasonal flu strains and can have a higher mortality rate, but not all of them.
- ❖ Most people in the world have no immunity to the strains that cause a pandemic, thus the illness rates are significantly higher than with seasonal flu.
- ❖ It will take at least 4 to 6 months after a pandemic strain emerges to make any vaccine against it, and up to two years to make enough for everyone in the U.S.
- ❖ A pandemic strain of influenza will circle the globe quickly, in several months, and affect all countries.
- ❖ A serious pandemic will affect every facet of life, from food and supplies to education to jobs to the economy.

