

Help protect yourself and your family from infection

Prevent infection

Flu viruses infect the nose, throat and lungs, and spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Other people become infected when they are near a person who is actively sick, or when they touch an infected surface and then infect themselves by touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- If water is not available, use a hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who have cold or flu symptoms.
- If you are sick with cold or flu symptoms:
 - ✓ Avoid close contact with others and stay at home if possible.
 - ✓ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not your hands.
 - ✓ Get the regular seasonal flu shot every year. During a pandemic, follow the advice of public health officials.
 - ✓ Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep. Be physically active. Manage stress. Drink plenty of fluids. Eat nutritious

foods. Stop smoking, to help decrease the risk of serious consequences if you do become ill with flu.



Know your neighborhood and community

- Identify neighbors, friends, family and co-workers who may be able to help you prepare for and respond to emergencies.
- Identify neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers who may need help preparing for and during emergencies because they don't understand English well, have special health needs, or are new to the area.
- Volunteer with local groups (including the Medical Reserve; Citizen Corps; schools; civic groups; and houses of worship) to prepare and assist in emergencies.
- Find out how Alexandria schools are preparing for a flu pandemic.
- Sign up to receive free information from the City of Alexandria government about emergencies such as pandemic flu, and other important issues. Register at enews.alexandriava.gov.

Understand how your work may be affected

During a pandemic flu, businesses may not operate on normal schedules:

- Ask your employer about their pandemic flu plan.
- Find out how your employer will contact you during a pandemic flu.
- Find out how family and sick leave will be handled.
- Find out if there are plans for people to work from home or elsewhere.

If a pandemic flu occurs, everyone may be at risk

- Medicines that can help treat the annual flu may not be effective against a pandemic flu.
- Vaccines that can protect everyone from a pandemic flu may not be available when the pandemic breaks out.

Be Prepared for the Pandemic Flu NOW

Help protect yourself and your family NOW

During a pandemic flu, stores may run out of supplies for long periods of time.

We could also be asked not to go to public places until the pandemic flu threat passes.

Store medical supplies to last an extra month NOW

Build up a supply of these items to last for an extra month. Remember to refrigerate those items that need to be kept cool and use the oldest supplies first.

- Prescription medicines for an extra month
- Medical supplies such as blood sugar measuring strips for people with diabetes
- Over-the-counter medicines for fever and pain (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- Other over-the-counter medicines such as those for diarrhea and cough and cold remedies
- Thermometer
- Soap
- Alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash

Store extra food and household items to last for at least two weeks or more

- Keep a two-week supply of food on hand. Easily stored food items include:
 - ✓ Ready-to-eat canned meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans and soups
 - ✓ Protein or fruit bars
 - ✓ Dry cereal and nonfat dry milk
 - ✓ Peanut butter or nuts
 - ✓ Dried fruit
 - ✓ Crackers
 - ✓ Canned juice
 - ✓ Baby food and supplies
 - ✓ Pet food and supplies
- Keep at least two weeks of other necessary supplies, such as diapers, toilet paper and garbage bags.
- Other things you normally use and would need to have on-hand if you could not leave your home for two weeks.
- Although water and electricity may not be affected by a pandemic flu, having the following items at home will help prepare you for other emergencies:

- ✓ 3-day supply of water (1 gallon for each person per day)
- ✓ Flashlights
- ✓ Batteries
- ✓ Portable (battery-run) radio
- ✓ Can opener (not electric)





A pandemic is a worldwide outbreak of disease which may affect many people.

- Public health experts are concerned that a pandemic flu (influenza) could break out in the United States.
- During severe flu pandemics in the past, 25% - 35% of the world's population was infected and many people died.

The City of Alexandria is planning and preparing for a possible flu pandemic.

We have prepared this pamphlet so you will know how you can prepare now to help protect yourself and your family.



Public health experts are concerned about a possible future pandemic flu (influenza). Pandemic flu viruses can start as viruses that make animals sick.

- Pandemic flu may be a threat when a new strain of influenza virus spreads in humans. Influenza outbreaks are common in humans and some animals such as birds and pigs. New virus strains may start in humans or may start in animals and then spread to humans.
- One example of a new flu virus spreading in humans began in the spring of 2009 when cases of human infection with a new swine-origin H1N1 influenza virus were first reported in Mexico and then found across the United States and internationally.
- Flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe. Some people may have difficulty fighting off the infection because the new virus is different from the flu viruses that made people sick during previous flu seasons. In addition, prior flu vaccinations may or may not provide protection against a new flu strain.

A pandemic flu would have a major impact on all of our lives

- A pandemic flu may spread very easily and rapidly throughout the region, the state and the entire country. A quarter of the population (25%) could be affected.
- A severe pandemic flu could cause many deaths. While some pandemics are relatively mild, we need to be prepared for a serious outbreak.
- The health care system could be overwhelmed, and places you rely on – like government offices, stores, schools, transportation and other services – may not be available.

What's Happening in Alexandria?

The Mayor's Working Group on Pandemic Influenza is preparing the City of Alexandria to serve citizens' needs if a pandemic flu breaks out in the Washington region.

- The Working Group includes City government officials, businesses, faith-based institutions and other community groups throughout Alexandria.
- The Working Group is making plans for the City to maintain communications, continue essential government services, and respond to increased healthcare needs if a pandemic flu does occur.
- The Alexandria Health Department and the Working Group are coordinating their activities with our neighbors in the National Capital Region, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States federal government.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

City of Alexandria
www.alexandriava.gov/flu
 703.746.4800
 TTY 703.838.5056

Alexandria Health Department
www.alexandriava.gov/health

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.pandemicflu.gov



06/2009



For a Pandemic Flu Outbreak

