

PANDEMIC FLU AND OTHER ILLNESSES

Influenza, although commonly confused with the stomach flu, is a viral infection focusses its attack on your respiratory system, thus affecting the nose, throat and lungs. An influenza pandemic could strike your community at any time. It is important to be prepared in order to lessen the impact a pandemic may have on you and your family. The following tips can help you prepare for a possible pandemic and limit the spread of infection should a pandemic occur.

Prepare Your Home

- Always have a two-week supply of food and water on hand, in case you are unable to get to the store or if the stores are short on supplies.
- Monitor your prescription drugs so that you always have a continuous supply in your home.
- Have nonprescription drugs and health supplies on hand, such as pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, and vitamins.

Infection Prevention Tips

- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer often.
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces in your home, workplace and car.
- If your doctor recommends it, get yourself and your family vaccinated against the flu.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to avoid spreading germs you may have come into contact with.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious foods.

If You Become Sick

- Continue to observe the above recommendations, including washing hands, avoiding close contact with others, getting plenty of sleep and drinking plenty of fluids.
- Stay home from work, school and public places, to avoid spreading illness to others (it is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone).
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.
- Talk to your doctor about taking a prescription antiviral medication.