

Preparing your home for an emergency is an important way to protect yourself and your loved ones.

What can YOU do to prepare for pandemic flu?

- ◆ Ask your employer about how business will continue during a pandemic.
- ◆ Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- ◆ Talk to school administrators, teachers, and parent-teacher organizations about school plans for pandemic influenza.
- ◆ Plan home-learning activities and exercises.
- ◆ Consider childcare needs.
- ◆ Identify family members, friends, and neighbors who may need assistance preparing for an emergency, or during an emergency.

Practice Healthy Habits!

It's very important for everyone to follow these simple steps to limit the spread of germs:

- ◆ Stay at home when you are sick.
- ◆ Wash your hands frequently during the day, (especially after coughing or sneezing). Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel.
- ◆ Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth.



- ◆ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- ◆ Immediately throw used tissues in the trash.
- ◆ Don't cough or sneeze into your hand. This spreads germs onto everything you touch.

Be prepared to stay home for several weeks

Begin stocking a supply of water, food and emergency supplies at your home. Don't wait until a pandemic hits to prepare. During a pandemic you may not be able to get to a store, or stores could run out of supplies.

Store foods that:

- ◆ are non-perishable (will keep for a long time) and don't require refrigeration.
- ◆ are easy to prepare without cooking.
- ◆ require little or no water, so you can conserve water for drinking.

Examples of non-perishable foods:

- ◆ Canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- ◆ Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- ◆ Protein or fruit bars
- ◆ Dried fruit, nuts
- ◆ Dry cereal or granola
- ◆ Peanut butter
- ◆ Crackers
- ◆ Canned Juices
- ◆ Bottled water - 1 gallon per day for each person and each pet
- ◆ Pet Food



Medical, Health, and Emergency supplies:

- ◆ Prescribed medical supplies
- ◆ Vitamins
- ◆ Soap and water or alcohol based hand wash
- ◆ Medicines for fever - acetaminophen, ibuprofen
- ◆ Thermometer
- ◆ Fluids with electrolytes
- ◆ Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers
- ◆ Cleansing agent/soap
- ◆ Manual can opener
- ◆ Portable radio with batteries
- ◆ Flashlight with batteries
- ◆ Garbage bags



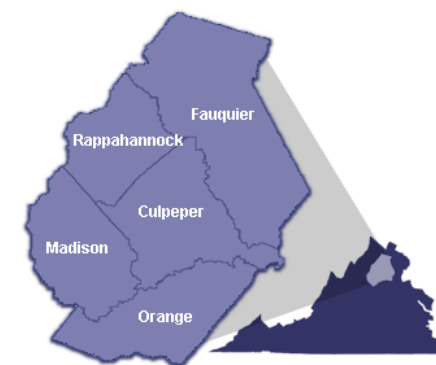
Flu

Bird Flu

Avian Flu

Pandemic Flu

Information for You and Your Family



Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Protecting You and Your Environment

What is the bird flu (avian influenza)?

- ◆ Bird flu is a disease of birds caused by influenza viruses.
- ◆ Bird flu viruses do not usually infect humans, but since 1997 there have been a small number of confirmed cases of human infection from a bird flu virus called H5N1.
- ◆ This H5N1 virus is currently affecting birds in Asia and Europe.

Will bird flu cause the next influenza pandemic?

- ◆ Bird flu could cause a flu pandemic among humans if a bird flu virus mutated (changed) and was able to spread easily from person-to-person.
- ◆ Experts around the world are watching for changes in bird flu viruses that could lead to a flu pandemic.

What is a flu pandemic?

- ◆ The flu (influenza) is a respiratory virus that causes fever, cough, muscle aches and tiredness.
- ◆ A flu pandemic is an outbreak of a newly emerging flu virus that occurs around the world.
- ◆ Pandemics are different from seasonal outbreaks of flu. Pandemic flu can cause serious illness because people do not have immunity (protection) to the new virus.

Is it safe to eat poultry?

- ◆ Yes, it is safe to eat poultry if it is properly and thoroughly cooked.



How could a flu pandemic affect my life?

- ◆ During a flu pandemic, everyday life could be disrupted because people in communities across the country would become very ill at the same time.
- ◆ These disruptions could include school and business closings, and interruption of basic services such as health care and public transportation.
- ◆ A pandemic will last much longer than most other emergency events. It may include waves of flu activity separated by several months.

Will the seasonal flu shot protect me against pandemic flu?

- ◆ No, it won't protect against pandemic flu.
- ◆ Once a pandemic begins, and the exact virus is identified, it will take several months to produce a vaccine that will be effective against the pandemic flu virus.

Has there ever been a flu pandemic?

Yes, in the past 100 years, there have been three flu pandemics.

- ◆ **1918-1919** Most severe, caused at least 500,000 U.S. deaths and 20 to 40 million deaths worldwide.
- ◆ **1957-1958** Moderately severe, caused at least 70,000 U.S. deaths and 1-2 million deaths worldwide.
- ◆ **1968-1969** Least severe, caused at least 34,000 U.S. deaths and 700,000 deaths worldwide.

How do I take care of myself or a family member who is sick with the flu?

- ◆ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ◆ Get lots of rest.
- ◆ Take ibuprofen or acetaminophen for fever.
- ◆ If you are having trouble breathing, or you are getting worse, contact your health care provider immediately.

What is the health department doing to prepare for pandemic flu?

- ◆ Completed and posted the Virginia Pandemic Influenza Plan: www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu
- ◆ Working closely with local healthcare providers and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor infectious disease activity.
- ◆ Providing residents with up-to-date information about pandemic flu and the steps they can take to prepare.
- ◆ Working closely with county governments and community partners through the Pandemic Preparedness Coordinating Committee to plan for a coordinated local response.

What risks do Virginians face if there is flu pandemic?

If a new and severe strain of flu were to begin spreading across the globe, Virginia would not be spared from its impact. The severity of the next pandemic cannot be predicted, but modeling studies suggest that its effect could be severe. In the absence of any control measures (vaccination or drugs), it is estimated that in Virginia a "medium-level" pandemic could cause:

- ◆ 2,700 to 6,300 deaths
- ◆ 12,000 to 28,500 hospitalizations
- ◆ 575,000 to 1.35 million outpatient visits
- ◆ 1.08 million to 2.52 million people becoming sick

For additional information please visit the Virginia Department of Health's Pandemic Flu website at:

www.vdh.virginia.gov/PandemicFlu
or the Federal Pandemic Flu website at:
www.PandemicFlu.gov