PREPARING FOR PANDEMIC FLU

Being prepared can give you peace of mind and confidence during a pandemic. It can help you, your family, and community cope more easily. You and your community can take actions that can help delay or reduce the impact of a pandemic. The VA, all levels of government, and others are taking steps to plan and prepare for pandemic flu. Use this information to prepare yourself and your family for a flu pandemic.

PANDEMIC FLU

- Pandemic flu happens when a new flu virus spreads to people all over the world.
- Pandemic flu is not the same as seasonal flu.
- Getting a flu shot or nasal spray is the best way to protect yourself from seasonal flu.
- Pandemic flu might make people sicker than seasonal flu and might spread easily to others because there would be no vaccine at first.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF PANDEMIC FLU

A pandemic could change our communities in many ways. For example:

- Waves of pandemic flu may occur in communities for 6-8 weeks, then occur again months later.
- The country and the world could be affected for 1 to 2 years.
- 3 or more in every 10 people could become ill.
- 4 out of every 10 workers may miss work due to their own illness, caring for family or other reasons.
- Schools may be dismissed for weeks.
- Public gatherings (sports, concerts, movies) may be canceled.
- Public transportation could be limited.
- Businesses and public services may close or limit hours.
- People with flu symptoms may be asked to stay home or away from others while ill.
- Those exposed to illness may be asked to stay away from others until any threat of illness has passed.

STEPS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY CAN TAKE TO BE PREPARED FOR PANDEMIC FLU

- **STOCK UP.** Have at least a two week supply of food and water. Get foods that are nonperishable, ready to eat, and need little or no water to prepare.

- **CHECK HEALTH CARE SUPPLIES.** Have 2 weeks or more of medications, and other supplies. Renew prescriptions if necessary.

- **PLAN HOME CARE FOR FLU.** See SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

- **TALK WITH FAMILY ABOUT YOUR PANDEMIC AND OTHER EMERGENCY PLANS.**

- **ASK ABOUT AND PREPARE FOR WORKING FROM HOME.**

- **KNOW SCHOOL PLANS AND CONSIDER HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN.**

- **WORK WITH NEIGHBORS, SHARE EMERGENCY CONTACTS.** The elderly, people who live alone, and the disabled may need special help.

- **GET INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS IN YOUR COMMUNITY.** Contact your public health department, neighborhood association, or faith-based organization.
## SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food and Nonperishable Supplies</th>
<th>Medical, Health, and Emergency Supplies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups</td>
<td>Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein or fruit bars</td>
<td>Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (e.g. Advil® or Motrin®)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry cereal or granola</td>
<td>Anti-diarrheal medication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peanut butter or nuts</td>
<td>Vitamins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dried fruit</td>
<td>Fluids with electrolytes (e.g. Gatorade®, Pedalyte®)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crackers</td>
<td>Thermometer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canned juices</td>
<td>Facemasks, disposable gloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store-bought, sealed, bottled water</td>
<td>Regular or antimicrobial soap, water, or alcohol hand rub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food and formula in cans and jars</td>
<td>Tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, and disposable diapers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powdered milk</td>
<td>Feminine hygiene products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, water, and medicine for pets</td>
<td>Household cleaning supplies and garbage bags</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan for one gallon of water per person per day</td>
<td>Manual can opener</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change stored water every 6 months</td>
<td>Flashlight, portable radio and batteries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Replace canned goods after 1 year</td>
<td>Extra blankets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be mindful of expiration dates</td>
<td>Cash (bills &amp; coins)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* Brand names included in this information are provided as examples only. Their inclusion does not mean that these products are endorsed by VA or any other Government agency. Also if a particular brand name is not mentioned, this does not mean or imply that the product is unsatisfactory.

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**LEARN MORE AT:**

- [www.publichealth.va.gov/flu](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/flu)
- [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)
- [https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs/](https://twitter.com/DeptVetAffairs/)
- [www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs](http://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs)