



Be smart.
Be prepared.

GOOD HEALTH PRACTICES PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

WHAT IS A PANDEMIC?

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new virus appears or “emerges” in the human population, causes serious illness, and then spreads easily from person to person worldwide. Pandemics are different from seasonal outbreaks or “epidemics” of influenza. Seasonal outbreaks are caused by subtypes of influenza viruses that already circulate among people, whereas pandemic outbreaks are caused by new subtypes, by subtypes that have never circulated among people, or by subtypes that have not circulated among people for a long time. Past pandemics have led to high levels of illness, death, social disruption, and economic loss.

The following precautions and preparation will save lives and keep our community functioning during a pandemic situation.

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES LIKE THE FLU.

These healthy habits will help keep you and others from getting and passing on the virus:

- Clean your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and clean your hands afterward.
- Put used tissues in a wastebasket.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent germs from entering your body.

Also, a person with signs of the flu should:

- Stay home from work, school and errands and avoid contact with others.
- Consider wearing a surgical mask when around others.

Proper hand hygiene when washing hands with soap and water:

Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.

Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.

Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend!

Rinse hands well under running water.

Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

PREPARE FOR A FLU PANDEMIC.

Make a plan now for a flu pandemic. Figure out what you will do if members of your household have to stay home from work or school or stay separated from others for a period of time. Keep extra supplies of food, water, medications and your disaster supply kit on hand.

- Store a two-week supply of food. Select foods that do not require refrigeration, preparation or cooking. Ensure that formula for infants and any special nutritional needs are a part of your planning. Plan for your pets as well.
- Store a two-week supply of water, 1 gallon per person per day, in clean plastic containers.
- Store a supply of nonprescription drugs, such as pain relievers, cough and cold medicines, stomach remedies and anti-diarrheal medication, as well as vitamins and fluids with electrolytes (such as sports drinks).
- Store health and cleaning supplies, such as bleach, tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, a thermometer, disposable gloves, soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

LOCAL RESOURCES AND HELPFUL WEBSITES.

- Berks County Pandemic Advisory Council, www.flutoolbox.com
- American Red Cross, Berks County Chapter: (610) 375-4383, www.berks.redcross.org
- PA Department of Health, www.pandemicflu.state.pa.us
- Berks County Emergency Management Association: (610) 374-4800, www.berksema.com
- PandemicFlu.gov, www.pandemicflu.gov
- Center for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, www.hhs.gov
- American Red Cross, www.redcross.org

A message
from the
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Pandemic
Advisory Council.

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