



**INFLUENZA PANDEMIC
PLANNING
TEMPLATE/CHECKLIST
FOR
USDA EMPLOYEES
&
FAMILY MEMBERS**

(CHECKLIST # 1)

(Draft)

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INTRODUCTION

Currently there is a flu virus in birds called H5N1 that is of extreme concern to health officials. If the virus mutates (changes) and is subsequently passed from human to human a pandemic will occur.

A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that covers a wide geographic area and affects large number of people. The H5N1 flu virus (bird flu) could become a influenza pandemic in the near future.

This checklist have been prepared for USDA employees and their families to help them safeguard against the threat of a pandemic and to mitigate the effects of a pandemic should one occur.

This checklist encompasses the following areas:

- I. Pre-influenza pandemic planning.
- II. Characteristics of avian/regular influenza & the common cold.
- III. Influenza pandemic.
- IV. Frequently asked questions.

I. PRE-PANDEMIC PLANNING

USDA employees and their families can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. USDA has developed the following checklist to assist the gathering of information and resources that may be needed in the event of an influenza pandemic

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Get informed – reliable, accurate, & timely information is available at www.pandemicflu.gov or the Center for Disease Control & Prevention Hotline at: 1-800-232-4636.
- Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted (i.e. hospitals, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, post offices, etc.).
- Consider how to care for people with special needs.
- Consider childcare needs.
- Consider other ways to get to work or find out if you can work from home
- Plan for home learning activities & exercises should schools close.
- Think how you can rely less on public transportation during a pandemic.
- Prepare backup plans for taking care of loved ones who are far away.
- Ask your supervisor about how your office will conduct business during a pandemic.
- Plan for the possible reduction or loss of income if you are unable to work.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for influenza pandemic

ITEMS TO HAVE ON HAND FOR AN EXTENDED STAY

- Stock a supply of water. Public water-work services may be interrupted and stores might run out of water.
- Store foods that:
 - Are nonperishable (will keep for a long time) and don't require refrigeration.
 - Are easy to prepare in case you are unable to cook.
 - Require little or no water, so you can conserve water for drinking.

EXAMPLES OF FOOD & NON-PERISHABLES

- Ready-to-eat meats, fruits & vegetables.
- Canned or boxed juices, milk & soup.
- Canned food, fruits & vegetables.
- High-energy foods such as peanut butter, jelly, low-sodium crackers, granola bars, & trail mix.
- Special food for infants or persons on special diets.
- Cookies, hard candy.
- Instant coffee.
- Dry cereals.
- Powdered milk.
- Pet food.

***** IMPORTANT*****

NOW IS THE TIME TO STORE FOOD AND WATER AND NOT AFTER A PANDEMIC STARTS. REMEMBER HOW HARD IT IS TO OBTAIN FOOD AND WATER DURING EMERGENCIES SUCH AS SNOWSTORMS, HURRICANES & TORNADOS. EACH TIME YOU GO TO THE SUPERMARKET PICK UP A FEW OF THE ITEMS ON THIS LIST AND STORE THEM

EXAMPLES OF MEDICAL, HEALTH & EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose, & blood-pressure monitoring equipment.
- Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- Nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- First aid kit.
- Soap & alcohol based hand wash & wipes.
- Medicine for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- Thermometer.
- Flashlights, portable radio & batteries.
- Manual can opener.
- Garbage bags, tissues, toilet paper & disposable diapers.
- Emergency health information on each family member to include name, blood type, allergies, past/current medical conditions & current medications & dosages.
- Supply of disinfectants and household chlorine bleach.
- Isopropyl 70% or ethyl 60%alcohol.

- N95 facemasks and disposable rubber gloves to wear if you have to go out in public or care for someone should a pandemic occur.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- Create an emergency contact list that includes the names/phone numbers of:
 - Local personal emergency contact.
 - Out-of-town personal emergency contact.
 - Hospital near work, school & home.
 - Family physician(s) & pharmacy.
 - Employer & school contact & emergency information.
 - Religious/spiritual organization.
 - Veterinarian.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- Plan home learning activities and materials such as books and exercises because schools may be closed for an extended period of time.
- Help schools plan for an influenza pandemic. Talk to the school nurse or the health center. Talk to your teachers, administrators, and parent-teacher organizations.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF AVIAN/REGULAR INFLUENZA AND THE COMMON COLD

□ Become knowledgeable of the differences between the Avian Influenza, Regular Influenza and the common cold as detailed below:

SYMPTOM	AVIAN INFLUENZA	REGULAR INFLUENZA	COMMON COLD
Fever	Usual, sudden onset 100.4°-104° F (38°-40° C) and lasts 3-4 days or more	Usual, sudden onset 100.4°-104° F (38°-40° C) and lasts 3-4 days.	Rare
Headache	Usual and can be severe	Usual and can be severe	Rare
Aches and pains	Usual and can be severe	Usual and can be severe	Rare
Fatigue and weakness	Usual and can last 2-3 weeks or more after the acute illness	Usual and can last 2-3 weeks or more after the acute illness	Sometimes, but mild
Debilitating fatigue	Usual, early onset can be severe	Usual, early onset can be severe	Rare
Nausea, vomiting, Diarrhea, dehydration	Probable in all patients	In children < 5 years old	Rare
Watering of the eyes	Rare	Rare	Usual
Runny, stuffy nose	Rare	Rare	Usual
Sneezing	Rare in early stages	Rare in early stages	Usual
Sore throat, skin characteristics	With Avian Influenza's cytokine storm, can have bleeding throat/gums, bruising on the skin	Usual sore throat, no hemorrhagic characteristics	Usual sore throat, no hemorrhagic characteristics
Chest discomfort	Can be severe if Avian Influenza's cytokine storm occurs	Usual	Sometimes, but mild to moderate
Complications	Secondary infections include pneumonia, meningitis, sinus infection; with Avian Flu can have ARDS (Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome) Respiratory failure; is often life threatening	Secondary infections include pneumonia; can worsen a current chronic condition; can be life threatening	Congestion or ear-ache
Fatalities	Avian Influenza currently has about 60% mortality with many younger people (< 25 years old) dying	Well recognized, usually young and old	Not reported
Prevention	No vaccine available now for Avian Flu; frequent hand-washing; cover your cough	Influenza vaccine; frequent hand-washing; cover your cough	Frequent hand-washing, cover your cough

III. INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

Everyone must recognize and understand the degree to which their personnel actions will govern the course of the pandemic. The success or failure of infection control methods is ultimately dependent upon the acts of individuals, and the collective response of 300 million Americans will significantly influence of the pandemic and its medical, social, and economic outcomes. Individuals will, in general, respond to a pandemic and to public health intervention in ways that they perceive to be congruent with their interests and their instincts for self-preservation. Institutions in danger of becoming overwhelmed will rely on voluntarism and sense of civic and humanitarian duty of ordinary Americans. The talents and skills of individuals like you USDA employees and families will prove crucial in our Nation's response to a pandemic. Should an influenza pandemic occur the following practices are recommended:

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Limit your exposure outside of your home.
- Avoid crowded places (including movie theaters, malls & sporting events).
- Change work schedules & patterns to minimize contact.
- Work from home if possible (Telework).
- During the early stages of a pandemic, enforced quarantines may be used, but a more voluntary home quarantine will likely be recommended. Be prepared for both.

CLEANING & STERILIZING

- Influenza pandemic is killed by alcohol & bleach. Clean furniture, work-areas, food preparation areas, with house detergent followed by a sterilizing solution (alcohol or bleach).
- Disinfect material contaminated with blood or body fluids with bleach (Use precautions, i.e. use in well ventilated areas, use protective clothing while handling and using undiluted bleach, do not mix with strong acids to avoid release of chlorine gas and be aware that it is corrosive to metals).
- Disinfect smooth metal surfaces, tabletops, and other surfaces on which bleach cannot be used with Isopropyl 70% or ethyl alcohol 60%. (Use precautions, i.e. It is flammable

and toxic and is to be used in well ventilated areas, avoid inhalation, keep away from heat sources, electrical equipment, flames, and hot surfaces, allow to dry completely).

STAY HEALTHY

- Take common sense steps to limit the spread of the flu.
- Wash hands frequently with warm, soapy water for at least 10-15 seconds.
- Model the correct behavior and teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water. Provide them with hand sanitizer or wipes for school.
- Cover your mouth & nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze & place the tissues in a wastebasket.
- Model the correct behavior and teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues.
- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. This means staying home from school if sick.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper arm if you don't have a tissue. Wash you hands after sneezing (disposable wipes).
- Avoid shaking hands & contact with others.
- Keep living and work areas clean.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- You may choose to wear a mask as part of your individual protection. The use of masks may reduce but not eliminate the possibility of becoming infected. It is clear that their use will not cause harm.
- Certain individuals such as those exposed to poultry products, veterinary workers, and healthcare workers should wear masks.
- Discard masks after 4-8 hours of use. Do not re-use or share them. Put used masks and gloves in a sealed plastic bag and throw them away with your household trash.

□ Family members who care for the sick should wear facemasks & disposable latex or plastic gloves. The preferred mask is an N95 mask that can be purchased at a local hardware store. Get some now before there is a run on them.

IV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE H5N1 FLU VIRUS

The following are some of the more frequently asked questions about the H5N1 (avian or bird influenza) that is the virus that could trigger an influenza pandemic if it is subsequently passed from human to human:

Can I get H5N1 from eating infected poultry or eggs?

In general, scientists do not think you can get H5N1 from eating infected poultry or eggs. To avoid any possibility of getting sick, follow safe cooking practices: Cook chicken or eggs at temperatures above 70°C (158°F); keep raw and cooked foods apart; wash your hands when handling raw foods; clean all cutting boards, counter tops and utensils; do not eat raw, undercooked poultry or poultry products, or raw runny eggs.

Can I get H5N1 from working with/around poultry? What if I work on a farm?

Exposure to infected poultry and their droppings or dust contaminated with poultry droppings has been associated with human infection; however, this is a rare occurrence. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) have developed recommendations for people working with poultry.

Is H5N1 the same as SARS?

No. H5N1 is a completely different virus from the one that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Is it safe to visit other countries that have reported cases of H5N1 infection?

To date, the World Health Organization (WHO) has not advised any travel restrictions. When visiting affected countries, avoid farms and live poultry and birds, and adopt good hygiene practices. The CDC provides updated information for travelers. For further details, visit their website: www.cdc.gov/travel.

Are there any supplements, herbs or natural food products I can take to help protect me from H5N1?

To date, dietary supplements and herbal remedies have not been evaluated or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for H5N1. Because supplements and over-the-counter products can interfere with prescription medicines, consult your healthcare provider before using such products.

Will my annual flu shot (vaccination) protect me against H5N1?

No. Your yearly flu vaccination will not provide any protection against H5N1.

What should I do if I am pregnant during the pandemic?

Make sure you get your seasonal flu shot, even though it will not protect you from H5N1 it will still protect you from the seasonal flu. Keep all appointments with your doctor. At the first onset of flu symptoms, go see your doctor.

Should I stockpile food and water? If so, for how many days?

Experts recommend stockpiling 3 days worth of non-perishable food and stockpiling 3 gallons of water for each person in your household, per day. This is a standard approach for any emergency that might limit your ability to leave your home.

Will I need to be quarantined?

If pandemic flu occurs in the United States, it is likely that authorities will ask people to voluntarily restrict their travel and other day-to-day activities. For those who are infected with H5N1, mandatory (enforced) movement and activity restrictions may be imposed to limit the spread of H5N1.

Who should I contact if I think I'm infected with H5N1?

If you believe you are infected or have been ill for longer than 10 days or have a fever above 104°F, contact your healthcare provider.

Can I go to my doctor/healthcare provider and be tested for H5N1?

To date, there is no routine test for H5N1.

Am I at a greater risk for being infected with H5N1 if my immune system is already weakened due to HIV, cancer treatment or other health problems?

People with weakened immune systems are at greater risk of H5N1 related complications and, if infected, may be capable of spreading the virus for longer periods of time.

Are there any devices or products that will boost my immune system and provide protection for H5N1?

If a pandemic occurs, it is highly likely that many people will be offering to sell you a variety of products that they will claim are designed to protect you from H5N1. In nearly all cases, such products will be of little to no value and just cost you money. Follow the advice of public health officials and your personal doctor.

□ Can H5N1 live on everyday surfaces like clothes, telephones, door handles, toys, grocery carts, etc.?

Some reports suggest H5N1 can live for several days on a variety of everyday surfaces. Follow the suggestions noted in “Cleaning and Sterilizing” for treating your working and living areas. Washing clothes in hot water will kill any H5N1 particles that could be on them. Wearing disposable gloves, or using paper towels or napkins as a barrier, will reduce your chances of getting H5N1. Wash your hands frequently during the day and avoid touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

□ Can my pets (cats, dogs) contract H5N1? Can I contract H5N1 from them?

This diagram below shows how humans and animals interact to catch and spread H5N1. For example, it can pass to a farmer’s chickens, then pass to humans. Likewise, it can pass to a farmer’s pigs and then pass to humans. In a pandemic flu, the virus will change (mutate) so that it can also easily pass from one human to another.

- There is evidence that cats can catch H5N1, but it is not certain that they can pass it to humans.
- There is no known case of dogs catching or spreading H5N1.
- Pet birds can catch H5N1 and spread it to humans. However, there should be no concern if bird owners keep their birds in clean conditions, away from wild birds, and continue to wash their hands after handling birds or coming into contact with bird droppings.

