

## THREE THINGS

### *to Know about Pandemic Flu*

1. An influenza pandemic happens when a new type of flu virus develops, spreads easily from person to person, and causes serious illness around the world.
2. Pandemic influenza is not the same as seasonal flu. Because seasonal flu is a different virus than a pandemic the current flu shot would not protect against pandemic influenza.
3. Bird flu—also known as avian flu or H5N1—can become a pandemic flu if it changes so that it can easily spread from human to human.

## THREE THINGS

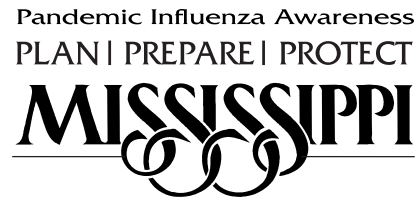
### *to Expect During a Pandemic*

1. **Long-term Impact**
  - A pandemic could last for weeks or months
  - The number of people getting sick may decrease, then rapidly increase, causing waves of illness
  - Local, state, national and global economies may be affected
2. **Shortage of vaccines and medications**
  - Scientists need to know the exact type of influenza before working on a vaccine
  - It may take time for a vaccine to be developed
  - Medicine may be in short supply
  - It is important for people to stay healthy by avoiding crowds and practicing good hygiene
3. **Disruption of daily activities**
  - Schools and businesses may close
  - Everyday services may be interrupted
  - Large gatherings, such as religious services, may be cancelled
  - Health care centers may be busy and crowded
  - Sick people may be encouraged to stay home

## THREE WAYS

### *You Can Help*

1. **Prepare and Practice.** Make a family emergency plan and an emergency kit. Practice good personal hygiene.
2. **Look after your neighbors.** Share this brochure. Check in on elderly neighbors and those who are homebound.
3. **Stay informed.** For more health information about pandemic flu, visit [www.HealthyMS.com](http://www.HealthyMS.com), or call the Mississippi Department of Health at 1-866-HLTHY4U (1-866-458-4948).



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# *Pandemic Influenza* and Mississippi

*Keep* INFORMED

*Be* PREPARED

*Take* ACTION

*Stay* PROTECTED

*What You Can Do  
to Protect Your Family  
and Your Community*

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## ABOUT *Pandemic Flu*

### Spread

Pandemic influenza spreads in the same way as seasonal influenza:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Close contact with a sick person
- Touching contaminated items and then touching your nose or mouth

### Symptoms

Symptoms of pandemic influenza are similar to seasonal flu, but are often more severe:

- Fever, chills
- Body aches
- Dry cough, sore throat
- Nasal congestion
- Sneezing
- Fatigue
- Stomach symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)

### Treatment

Medications and Vaccines

- Antiviral medicine may be used for treatment of flu symptoms
- Scientists will need to identify the exact type of influenza virus
- It may take time for a vaccine to be developed
- Officials will let residents know where to go for a vaccine once it is available



## THREE STEPS *Mississippi is Taking*

### 1. Working Together

Public health, state and local government agencies are working together to:

- Plan and practice for effective response
- Keep residents informed
- Stock and distribute medicine when needed

### 2. Watching for Possible Cases

Local, regional and state agencies:

- Monitor influenza-like illness around the state for new types of flu
- Look at laboratory tests to confirm types of influenza virus strains
- Report unusual cases to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



### 3. Improving Health Care

Mississippi is working to:

- Coordinate preparations with hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes
- Help health care facilities with response planning
- Provide food, medical care and other services during a pandemic for people who are homebound

Many current activities related to pandemic preparedness will be useful in responding to any infectious disease emergency.

## THREE THINGS *You Can Do to Prepare*

### 1. Practice Good Health and Hygiene

To reduce the spread of influenza:

- Wash hands regularly
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and throw away used tissues
- Keep hands away from your nose and mouth



To keep your body healthy in order to fight the flu:

- Eat a balanced diet
- Stop smoking
- Exercise regularly
- Get regular medical checkups

### 2. Plan for Disruption of Activities

- Ask your employer about the company's business plan
- If possible, work from home if a pandemic occurs
- Since schools may be closed for an extended period, consider childcare needs
- Prepare to care for elderly relatives in your home, if necessary

### 3. Make Sure Your Family is Prepared

- Stock a two-week supply of water and non-perishable food
- List all family contact information
- Make a list of family medical information (such as blood type and allergies)
- Make a medical supply kit that includes prescription medicines, pain relievers, cough and cold medicines, stomach remedies and first-aid items

