

Getting ready for a flu pandemic

Hygiene – keeping clean

- Washing and drying your hands properly is one of the best ways of protecting yourself against the spread of germs. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap or an alcohol-based rub. Drying hands well is important too.
- Wash and dry hands:
 - before preparing food and eating
 - after coughing or sneezing, blowing noses, wiping children's noses, visiting the toilet or looking after sick people.
- Keep your coughs and sneezes covered. Put tissues straight into a covered, lined rubbish bin or a plastic bag.
- Try to stay a metre away from sick people to reduce the spread of germs.



If you work from home or run your own business

- You need to think about how to keep your business running. You will find some ideas in the Business Planning Guide at www.med.govt.nz – select from the list 'Influenza Pandemic Planning Information for Business Continuity' then select '1. Business Continuity Planning Guide'.
- You may want to talk to your insurance provider about your cover.

More information on influenza and planning for an influenza pandemic is available on:

www.moh.govt.nz/pandemicinfluenza

or you can call Healthline
0800 611 116

New Zealand Government



Have a plan



Setting up your
emergency kit



Hygiene - keeping clean



And other things
you can do...

Getting ready for a flu pandemic

When a new flu virus infects many people around the world, it is called an influenza pandemic.

Health experts and governments around the world are worried that flu viruses affecting animals are changing into viruses that easily affect people. If these new viruses spread in New Zealand, many of us could become very sick.

There are a few
simple things
you can do now
to prepare

Have a plan

During a pandemic, you or your family may be so sick that you need to stay at home for several weeks. Make a plan with family and friends so it includes:

- who could help with food and supplies if you and your household are ill.
- if you have prescription medicines (eg, for blood pressure), renewing your prescription well before you run out.
- the telephone numbers of people who live near you, as well as your doctor's phone number. (Keep this in a place that is easy to see, eg, on the fridge door).
- an emergency supplies kit – see the 'Emergency Survival Items' list on the inside back cover of the Yellow Pages. Or check the Get ready

Get thru website:

www.getthru.govt.nz
and select 'How to get ready'.



Build up your emergency supplies kit

- Have a supply of food and drinks to last for at least a week. Choose long-lasting foods in cans and packets, and dried foods.
- Paracetamol or Ibuprofen are good for bringing down a fever and reducing aches and pains. Do not use anything else for children unless you talk to your doctor or pharmacist first.
- Masks worn by sick people can help stop the spread of germs. You can buy masks from a pharmacy (or from a hardware store). If there is a pandemic, people will be told how and when to use their masks. A mask can be worn only for a short time, and needs changing when wet from sneezing and coughing.
- Have tissues (or toilet paper) and plastic bags for used tissues.
- Think about things to do, if you and your family have to stay home for more than a week (eg, books, games and videos).



Flu jabs

- Ask your doctor for an influenza vaccination each year. The usual yearly flu jabs will not protect you against a new pandemic, but they will help stop you getting ill with other influenza viruses. Because these viruses change all the time, you need to get vaccinated every year.
- Vaccination is free for people aged 65 years and over, and adults and children with certain long-term (chronic) conditions. It is also free for pregnant women, anyone who is morbidly obese, and healthy children from six months until their fifth birthday at their doctor's discretion.