

Pandemic influenza is caused by a new virus that people have not been exposed to before. It is likely to be more severe, affect more people, and cause more deaths than seasonal flu because people will not have immunity to the new virus.

The pandemic may come and go in waves, each of which can last for months at a time. A severe pandemic could change the patterns of daily life for extended periods due to people in communities across the country becoming ill at the same time. People may choose to stay home to keep away from others who are sick or may need to stay home to care for ill family members. Schools may close due to staff shortages as a result of illness or to slow the spread of the disease. You should plan for alternate childcare. Basic services and access to supplies could be disrupted.

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. The following will help you gather the resources you may need to have on-hand for an extended stay at home.

Examples of medical, health and emergency supplies:

- Prescribed medical supplies such as blood pressure monitoring equipment
- Prescription medication - keep at least one week's supply of medication on-hand
- Medicines for fever such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Vitamins
- Cleansing agent/soap/alcohol-based hand rinse (60% or more)
- Household cleaning agents
- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers
- Garbage bags
- Manual can opener, bottle opener
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Radio (battery operated)
- Fuel stove and fuel (follow manufacturer's instructions)
- First aid kit
- Candles and matches/lighter

Examples of food and non-perishables:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables and soups (enough for at least 6-8 weeks). Replace canned food and dry goods once per year.
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water. You should have on-hand 4L/person/day - 2 for drinking and 2 for food preparation, hygiene and dishwashing. An additional 2L of water for each person in your household may be necessary as people with the flu require more hydration.
- Canned or jarred baby food or formula
- Pet food