



# Influenza pandemic special

- + Everything you need to know to prepare.**
- + Vital information about what to do before and during an influenza pandemic.**
- + Use this information to prepare for an influenza pandemic then put this in your phone book to refer to in the event of an influenza pandemic.**

CODES		
Phase	Example situation	Alert code
<b>Information</b>	Confirmation of an Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) related emergency usually outside of New Zealand	<b>White</b>
<b>Standby</b>	Possible EID related emergency in New Zealand - imported cases without local transmission	<b>Yellow</b>
<b>Activation</b>	EID related emergency in New Zealand - many imported cases and/or local transmission, outbreak or epidemic	<b>Red</b>
<b>Stand-down</b>	End of outbreak, epidemic or emergency - services returning to normal	<b>Green</b>

## Message from the Medical Officer of Health

History tells us a pandemic will happen at some time despite all our best efforts.

However, there are some very practical steps that will help prepare us.

- + WHO will continue to actively monitor the global situation and assist countries affected by the current avian influenza virus.
- + The Ministry of Health and district health boards are leading New Zealand's preparations.
- + Every business must make its own plans.
- + Every household can also take steps to prepare.

The next pandemic could severely challenge our daily lives in many ways for several months. Planning and preparation must continue and we are unlikely to ever reach a stage where we have done everything possible.

Already we are seeing examples of how pandemic planning activities are benefiting our communities. For example, businesses that are used to competing are starting to cooperate with each other; neighbours are getting to know each other better, and households are making general preparations, which will be useful for any emergency situation.

In other words our communities are becoming more resilient, which has to be a good thing. This publication is an overview of everything you need to know about influenza pandemic and tips on how to prepare yourself, your business, family and friends. Keep it in your phone book for future reference.

**Dr Phil Shoemack**  
Bay of Plenty and Lakes Medical Officer of Health

Glossary	
<b>Pandemic</b>	An outbreak of an infectious disease that spreads globally
<b>Influenza</b>	Infectious disease often known as the 'flu', more serious than the common cold
<b>Bird Flu</b>	An influenza illness that usually only affects birds (avian influenza, avian flu)
<b>Tamiflu</b>	Anti-viral medicine the New Zealand Government is stockpiling for use in an influenza pandemic
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment such as masks and gloves
<b>CBAC</b>	Community Based Assessment Centre
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation

## It's not a case of 'if', but 'when'

An influenza pandemic could easily have a significant impact on our economic and social structures for the medium and long term.

It could happen next month, next year, or when our children's children are parents.

As the World Health Organisation (WHO) suggests, pandemics are not hypothetical events - the 1918 'Spanish Flu' spread globally and killed between 40 and 50 million people. Flu pandemics in 1957 and 1968 killed two and one million people respectively.

We don't know that the worst-case scenario will happen but we do know the threat is real. We don't know how widespread the pandemic will be; we don't know when the virus will mutate and how fast it will spread. We also don't know the impact to ourselves, our families or our business operations.

We do know, as for any threat, that we must plan for it and know what to do when it hits - this publication aims to help you prepare.

# Preparing you and your family for a pandemic

## Back to basics to protect yourself before and during a pandemic



### Wash your hands

Good personal hygiene can help you avoid getting and spreading influenza. In particular wash your hands thoroughly after coughing, sneezing, wiping or blowing your nose (or a child's nose), after using the toilet, as well as before preparing food, before eating, and while looking after anyone who is sick.

### Stay away from sick people

It's important to keep sick people and well people apart and preferably stay more than one metre away from anyone who is sick. Avoid having visitors when you are sick.

## Keep your distance

*When it comes to avoiding the spread of influenza in New Zealand, pigs and birds are of less concern - it's people you need to be aware of.*

**Influenza is highly infectious. To help control and reduce the spread of infection, it's important to keep at least one metre away from anyone who is sick, or if you have influenza - keep your distance.**

We can all do our bit to help stop the spread of infection. If you have influenza, avoid other people as much as possible until you are well. Whether you are at work or socialising, ask yourself "do I have to be here?" and if it's not necessary, stay home.

Public gatherings are likely to be a means of transmission during the early stages of a pandemic.

The spread of disease is more likely in crowded situations such as sports events,

### Stop the transfer of germs

Disinfection and ventilation stop the transfer of germs. The influenza virus can live up to two days on dry hard surfaces such as doorknobs, taps, telephones and toilets. The virus can be killed with diluted household bleach 5% (25ml bleach to 1 litre water) or 70% alcohol.

### Breathe fresh air

The greater the turnover of air in workplaces or homes, the greater the chance of breathing fresh air. During an influenza pandemic increase air circulation by keeping windows open to increase the rate of air exchange.

schools, bars or an institution such as prison or a rest home. During a pandemic, people will probably avoid these sorts of situations and in some cases public gatherings may be cancelled.

**If you can't avoid being around people when you are sick, or you are well and want to help avoid the spread of infection, there are two things to remember - hand washing and cough etiquette.**

Sing 'Happy Birthday' to yourself twice while you wash your hands, then dry them, preferably with paper towels.

The term 'cough etiquette' basically means - cover your cough, so carry tissues if you are sick and dispose of used ones in a lined bin.

## Prepare an emergency response kit

*Prepare for a potential influenza pandemic by gearing up for a civil defence emergency.*



### Build up an emergency supplies kit

Think about an expanded emergency supplies kit. You can find a list of basic emergency kit contents on the inside back cover of the Yellow Pages. Or check the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management website [www.civildefence.govt.nz](http://www.civildefence.govt.nz) on "What To Do in a Disaster".

Have a supply of food and drinks to last for at least a week. Choose non-

perishable foods like canned foods, soup sachets and dried foods.

### Keep important phone numbers in a prominent place

Put together a list of contact details for people who could help you with food and supplies if you and your family are ill. This should include neighbours and your family doctor. Put it in a prominent place such as the fridge door.

## Further items to include in your civil defence kit

- + Have extra paracetamol for all the family to help relieve aches and pains, and high temperatures. Remember not to give aspirin to children under the age of 12.
- + If you have prescription medicines (eg for blood pressure), don't wait until you run out to get more. Consider putting some in your emergency supplies kit.

- + Have tissues (or toilet paper) and plastic bags - supermarket bags are good - to put the used tissues into.
- + Think about things to do if you and your family have to stay home for a couple of weeks (eg books, games and videos).

A list of basic emergency kit contents can be found on the inside back cover of the Yellow Pages or at [www.civildefence.govt.nz](http://www.civildefence.govt.nz)

## Get vaccinated against the flu

While being immunised against seasonal influenza won't necessarily protect you from a new strain of influenza, it will definitely help because being ill with influenza would make you more vulnerable should a pandemic strike.

The influenza vaccine becomes available from March each year. Contact your local doctor for more information.

## Reduce your risk of influenza

- + Catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue
- + Bag or bin dirty tissues
- + Wash and dry your hands after blowing your nose or wiping a child's nose
- + Encourage friends and family to follow these rules
- + Talk to your doctor about a seasonal influenza vaccination
- + Stay home if sick

# What to do if you have the flu



When an influenza pandemic hits thousands of people could get the deadly influenza strain. Most of these people will need to look after themselves at home. If you or a family member have influenza and you think it is too serious to be treated at home, call 0800 221 555 to talk to a medical professional. You will be advised as to whether you should stay home, go to a Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC), your GP or hospital.

If you visit a hospital or CBAC when you don't have the pandemic strain of influenza, you could catch it from someone who does.

Initially CBACs will open for limited hours each day, but if the numbers of people using the CBAC increase dramatically, there are plans to extend operating hours. Listen to your local radio station between 7am and 8am each morning for the CBAC hours

of operation. The information is also available from [www.lakesdhb.govt.nz](http://www.lakesdhb.govt.nz) or [www.bopdh.govt.nz/emergencymanagement](http://www.bopdh.govt.nz/emergencymanagement) CBACs will be staffed by trained doctors, nurses and health care workers. Please follow the advice they give you.

## What is a Community Based Assessment Centre (CBAC)?

An area where people with pandemic type illnesses can be assessed or provided with health services or health information. CBACs will be set up in public buildings. A CBAC is viewed as a means of providing the initial assessment of people with influenza type illness, away from doctors' surgeries and hospitals. This is because doctors' surgeries and hospitals normally operate at capacity, so they will not be able to cope with an additional burden caused

by pandemic. Having a dedicated facility for people with influenza separates them from those who may present at hospital or doctors surgeries with non infectious conditions.

## What happens at a CBAC?

If you visit a CBAC you will be assessed, provided with some advice and possibly medication. You will also receive information about how to care for yourself and others at home, to prevent the spread of the pandemic influenza.

## Is there a charge for attending a CBAC?

No.

## When will CBACs be open?

As soon as a pandemic is declared, CBACs will be open. Opening hours will vary depending on demand over the course of a pandemic and the public will be made aware via public broadcast.

## Where are the CBACs going to be in my local area?

CBACs will be set up in all urban areas and there will also be outreach clinics in smaller towns. Information confirming the location of these will be well publicised prior to the pandemic happening.

## How will the CBACs be staffed and run?

The CBACs will be staffed with people who have had the relevant level of health training. This may include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, health care assistants and others with a health background. A great deal of planning is underway in this area.

## Will I be able to get tamiflu/antivirals at the CBAC?

Antiviral medications and antibiotics will be given to patients assessed as benefiting from them.

## CBACs in the Bay of Plenty and Lakes region

<b>Taupo</b>	Taupo Great Lake Centre
<b>Rotorua 1</b>	Rotorua Convention Centre
<b>*Rotorua 2</b>	Rotorua International Stadium
<b>Tauranga Central</b>	Queen Elizabeth Youth Centre
<b>Tauranga - Mount</b>	Mount Maunganui Sports Centre
<b>*Tauranga - Otumoetai</b>	Contract Bridge Club
<b>Te Puke</b>	Te Puke Memorial Hall
<b>Whakatane</b>	Whakatane War Memorial Hall
*This information is subject to change.	

## Preparing your business for a pandemic

*In the event of an influenza pandemic, businesses play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of employees as well as reducing the negative impact to the economy and society.*

In the event of a pandemic staff will be affected in a range of ways. This could include reluctance to come to work for fear of succumbing to the flu, family members becoming ill, closure of schools and day-care facilities, restrictions on travel and disruption of public transport systems.

Businesses of all sizes need to be aware they could face a 50 per cent staff shortage for two to three weeks at the height of a pandemic and lower levels of staff absences for a few weeks either side. Whether you have six staff members or 600 it is time to plan.

### Protecting your staff

- + Take all necessary steps to minimise the risk of your staff contracting the illness.
- + Provide staff with regular updates about the bird flu situation.
- + Schedule periodic flu-prevention training sessions and encourage staff to have the

annual influenza immunisation.

- + Identify needs for personal protective equipment, cleaning equipment and check air-conditioning systems.
- + Ensure washrooms and kitchens are set up to maintain hygiene practices, eg liquid soap dispenser, paper towels and large lined bins.
- + Formulate a procedure for staff to follow if they develop characteristic influenza symptoms.
- + Consider organisational policies to encourage the sick to stay at home and enable staff to work from home.
- + Consider installing protective barriers in reception areas.

### Contingency planning for staff shortages

- + Plan for 50 per cent staff shortages for two to three weeks at the height of the pandemic and lower levels of staff absences for a few weeks either side.

- + Fifteen per cent of the workforce may be absent for eight weeks.
- + Decide activities/services to be maintained or discontinued; who needs to come to work.
- + Assess the core staff and skill requirements and plan to have essential positions backed up by an alternative staff member. Write desk files for all key positions.

### Suppliers

- + Assess how a pandemic would affect your essential supplies.
- + Do your suppliers/subcontractors have thoroughly tested business continuity plans?
- + Is there geographical diversity among your suppliers, so that the shut-down of one region won't mean your flow of supplies ceases?
- + You may need to shoulder some of the responsibility by increasing holdings of

some supplies so you have sufficient quantities to see you through a few hectic months.

### Security

- + Review your security arrangements.
- + Are security arrangements in place to protect your premises in the event of a shut-down or of your office being the only business operating in an area?
- + Computer security may be compromised if a pandemic strikes: if software companies don't have the IT personnel on the ground new computer viruses may not be caught in time.
- + Prepare a procedure for staff to handle such a contingency - by switching off broadband, not opening e-mail attachments, making daily backups of critical data and storing them offsite.

**A business planning template can be found at [www.bopdhb.govt.nz/emergencymanagement](http://www.bopdhb.govt.nz/emergencymanagement)**

# Anti-virals, the magic bullet?

There is no need for businesses, families or individuals to stockpile antivirals. The Ministry of Health has secured a national stockpile of antivirals for use during a pandemic with sufficient doses to treat about a third of the population if needed.

There are also limitations to antivirals, such as:

- + The pandemic strain of influenza is not yet known; therefore there is no way to know whether antivirals will work against a pandemic virus
- + Side effects, including possible nausea, vomiting, insomnia, dizziness. If a large number of people take antivirals there will be an equivalent large number of side effects
- + Antivirals are expensive (about \$70 for a five day course)
- + Their shelf life is only five years and we don't know when a pandemic will occur
- + Resistance to antivirals can develop and

the more they are used the more likely such resistance will occur.

While antivirals such as 'Tamiflu' and 'Relenza' have a degree of success at decreasing the severity of regular influenza symptoms, it's only if they are taken within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms, and preferably within 24 hours. The Ministry of Health's current plan is for antivirals to only be offered to people who present with influenza-like symptoms during the early phase of a pandemic.

Close contacts of such cases will also be offered antivirals as part of a cluster control strategy aiming to slow down the local spread of pandemic influenza.

Do not rely on antivirals, there are other simpler, cheaper options for preventing influenza. Personal hygiene and keeping away from sick people are the two most effective ways to help stop the spread of influenza.

## Difference between a cold and influenza

The common cold does not generally cause a fever or body aches and has a more gradual onset of symptoms.

### Influenza

Rapid onset of symptoms  
Fever of at least 37.8°C  
Fever or chills

### And at least two of the following

Muscle aches and pains  
Headache  
Weakness  
Sore throat  
Cough  
Loss of appetite

### Cold

Sneezing  
Runny nose  
Clogged nasal passages  
Dry and itchy throat  
Cough

## Contacts

### National enquiries

0800 AVN FLU  
www.moh.govt.nz

### Local enquiries

If you think you have influenza in the event of a pandemic call 0800 221 555

**Bay of Plenty District Health Board Communications Manager**  
07 579 8411

**Lakes District Health Board Communications Officer**  
07 349 7944

pandemic.influenza@lakesdhb.govt.nz

### More information

www.moh.govt.nz

www.who.int

www.lakesdhb.govt.nz

www.bopdhb.govt.nz/emergencymangement

www.dol.govt.nz

www.civildefence.govt.nz

### Resources

FREE Brochures, checklists, factsheets, guidelines, newsletters, posters and their translations can be found at [www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz)

### Local radio stations

#### Tauranga

93.4 FM More FM  
95.0 FM Classic Hits  
1008 AM Newstalk ZB

#### Whakatane

90.5 FM Radio 1XX

#### Rotorua

95.9 FM More FM  
97.5 FM Classic Hits  
702 AM Newstalk ZB

#### Taupo

93.5 FM More FM  
95.9 FM Newstalk ZB  
96.7 FM Classic Hits

### Iwi radio stations

#### Eastern Bay

Sun FM 96.9 FM  
Taiohi 98.4 FM

#### Tauranga

Moana AM 1440 AM

#### Rotorua

Pumanawa 89 FM

#### Turangi

Tuwharetoa 97.2 FM

# C

**Cover your cough and sneeze.** Use tissues, dispose of them properly and then wash your hands.

# H

**Have healthy hands.** Wash your hands often and well.

# I

**Isolate yourself.** Maintain personal space of 1.5 metres to minimise exposure to influenza virus from those who may be ill. Stay home if you become ill.

# R

**Reduce germs in your home and workplace.** Regularly disinfect common surfaces such as phones, remote controls, door knobs, light switches, toys, etc.

# P

**Prepare yourself and your family.** Get vaccinated annually and create an emergency plan and kit for yourself and your family.