

What can I do to protect myself and my family?

- Get your annual flu shot and keep your immunizations up-to-date
- Practise good respiratory etiquette by covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and disposing of used tissues, or coughing into your elbow or sleeve instead of on your hand
- Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner:
 - * after sneezing or coughing
 - * after wiping your nose
 - * before handling or eating food
 - * after using the toilet
 - * whenever hands are dirty
- Keep at least one metre (three feet) away from others to prevent the spread of flu
- Maintain one week of essential supplies (e.g., food, water, medications such as insulin and blood pressure pills, etc.)
- Have a thermometer and keep fever reducing medication at home
- Develop your own personal and family preparedness plans
- Know how to care for an adult or child who becomes sick with the flu
- Stay at home when you are sick
- Use separate personal items, such as towels and utensils, if you or family members are ill
- Call your physician in advance of visiting their office to let them know if you have symptoms of the flu

What planning is being done in Peel to prepare for pandemic flu?

Peel Public Health is working together with provincial and federal authorities to monitor flu activity around the world. We have developed a plan to deal with pandemic flu, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of Peel Public Health before, during and after a pandemic flu. This plan will be reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

Peel Public Health and Peel Region Emergency Programs have been educating, consulting and collaborating with key stakeholders to promote the development of their own pandemic and business continuity plans, as well as the development of a regional coordinated response plan.

For more information, please call the Region of Peel at 905-799-7700 or visit www.peelpandemic.ca.

Pandemic Influenza (Flu)

Are You Prepared?

Know how to reduce your risk!

pandemic
influenza
planning

B-07-120 06/05

What is pandemic?

Pandemic occurs when a disease spreads easily and rapidly throughout the world.

What is pandemic flu?

Pandemic flu is a new highly infectious viral respiratory illness that occurs when a new strain of the influenza virus appears and spreads quickly around the world. Pandemic flu will spread more quickly than seasonal human flu because humans will have little or no immunity to this new virus.

When will pandemic flu happen?

Experts cannot predict when the next pandemic flu might occur; however, history tells us that pandemics occur three to four times each century. Experts say that up to 25-35 per cent of the population may get pandemic flu at some point.

What is the difference between avian (bird) flu, seasonal human flu and pandemic flu?

Avian (bird) flu, seasonal human flu and pandemic flu are three different types of influenza.

Avian flu is a disease caused by influenza viruses carried and spread easily among birds. It is not easily spread among humans.

Seasonal human flu is a common respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses and spread among humans. The symptoms of seasonal human flu and pandemic flu can be relatively similar; however, the symptoms of pandemic flu can be much more severe and may affect younger and healthier adults.

Flu spreads when droplets containing the virus come into contact with another person's mouth, nose or eyes through coughing or sneezing. Flu also spreads when people touch surfaces which have recently been in contact with the virus and then touch their face.

Symptoms of the flu include fever, muscle pain and weakness, headaches, tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, diarrhea and vomiting (seen especially in children).

Pandemic flu can occur if avian flu mixes with human flu and creates a new strain of influenza virus that can spread easily from human to human. This can occur at any time during the year.

Will there be a vaccine available for pandemic flu?

A vaccine against pandemic flu cannot be developed until the pandemic influenza virus has been identified, and will take four to five months to be developed. The pandemic flu vaccine will initially be in short supply.

Where can I get credible information on pandemic flu?

Peel residents are advised to check the following websites for information:

peelpandemic.ca:

provides information on pandemic flu, how to reduce the risk of infection and information on business continuity planning for local businesses

peelregion.ca/prep:

provides information on personal and family emergency preparedness

accountforhealth.ca:

provides local businesses with information on business continuity planning

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