

## **Public Health Preparedness: Family Checklist**

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(This is part of a series of articles dedicated to public health preparedness.)

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak, and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of an influenza pandemic.

### **To plan for a pandemic:**

Have a supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and natural disasters. In addition to food and water, have any prescription and nonprescription drugs, and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.

You can also plan for a pandemic by volunteering with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response. Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic. This will help your community, and provide resources and information to enable you to prepare with your family.

Planning for a pandemic also includes day-to-day behaviors that limit the spread of germs and prevent infection. Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the correct behavior. Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, or cough/sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow. Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick. Avoid public places and gathering, and avoid shaking hands.

### **Here is a list of items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:**

Food and non-perishables:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food

Medical, health, and emergency supplies:

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based hand wash, to clean hands
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap to clean surfaces
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

The Medina County Health Department (MCHD) is partnering with local agencies, including the Medina County Emergency Management Agency and the Medina County Chapter of the American Red Cross, to prepare for a pandemic event. Our staff is involved in training and exercises designed to test our response capabilities. The MCHD has identified several locations in the county for the dispensing of medicines, if needed, and continues to work with local officials on issues that impact the health of county residents. For more information call the Medina County Health Department at (330) 723-9688, (330) 220-6265, or (330) 336-4136, or visit [www.medinahealth.org](http://www.medinahealth.org).

Sources:

PandemicFlu.gov  
[www.pandemicflu.gov/](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)