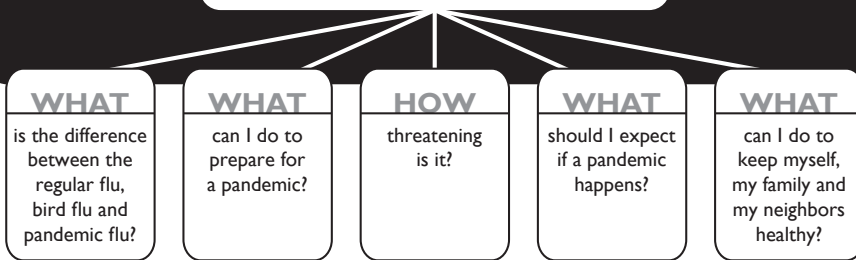


# SEASONAL FLU | BIRD FLU OR PANDEMIC FLU?

There have been numerous reports in the news about bird flu and the potential for a severe flu pandemic. **Right now:**

- There is no human pandemic flu virus. No one knows if or when it could occur. If it does occur, large numbers of people could be sick or die.
- Scientists believe the avian flu (bird flu) could be the virus that could cause a pandemic. In a small number of cases, it has passed from birds to humans, generally through direct contact with infected birds. It has not developed the ability to pass easily from person to person.

But, a lot of people ask:



## THIS GUIDE

is to help answer some of those basic questions, and to help you and your family prepare for this potential health emergency. In addition, the Sedgwick County Health Department, Public Safety agencies and community partners are developing a community response plan, to provide essential services for our citizens during a time of need.

### • What is Seasonal Flu?

Seasonal flu is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted person to person. Some people may have partial immunity, and a vaccine is available.

### • What is the Avian Flu?

Avian flu, often referred to as the "Bird flu," is an infection caused by avian (bird) influenza (flu) viruses. These flu viruses occur naturally among birds. Wild birds worldwide carry the viruses in their intestines, but usually do not get sick.

Bird flu is, however, highly contagious among birds and can make some domesticated birds, including chickens, ducks and turkeys, very sick and kill them. The Influenza A (H5N1) virus, or the "H5N1 virus," is one example of a strain of avian flu. H5N1 is a strain with pandemic potential, since it could ultimately adapt into a strain that is contagious among humans. Once that occurs, it will no longer be a "bird virus" - it will be a human virus.

### • What is Pandemic Influenza (flu)?

A flu pandemic is a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new influenza "A" virus appears or emerges in the human population, causes serious illness, and then spreads easily from person to person worldwide.



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## KEY DIFFERENCES

### SEASONAL FLU

- Occurs every year during the winter months.
- Affects 5 - 20% of the US population.
- Each year kills 36,000 - 40,000 in the US, and 500,000 to 1 million globally.
- Most people recover within a week or two.
- Deaths generally occur in "high risk" groups (elderly over 65; young, ages 6 - 23 months; those with existing medical conditions; people with compromised immune systems).
- Vaccination is effective because the virus strain in circulation each winter can be somewhat predictable.
- Annual vaccination, when the correct virus strain is used, is fairly reliable and antiviral drugs are available for those most at risk of becoming seriously ill.

### PANDEMIC FLU

- Occurs three to four times a century and can take place in any season.
- Experts predict an infection rate of 25 - 50% of the population, depending on the severity of the virus strain.
- The worst pandemic of the last century - the "Spanish Flu" of 1918 - killed 500,000 in the US and 50 million worldwide.
- Usually associated with a higher severity of illness, and consequently, a higher risk of death.
- All age groups may be at risk for infection, not just "high risk" groups. Otherwise fit adults could be at relatively greater risk, based on patterns of previous epidemics.
- A vaccine against pandemic flu may not be available at the start of the pandemic. New strains of viruses must be accurately identified, and producing an effective vaccine could take 6 months or more.
- Antiviral drugs may be in limited supply, and their effectiveness will only be known definitively once the pandemic is underway.

WHILE WE CAN'T PREVENT A FLU PANDEMIC...WE CAN ALL "BE INFORMED, BE HEALTHY AND BE PREPARED"

# BE INFORMED



Because we don't know if or when an influenza pandemic may spread to the US, or how severe it may be, there will continue to be many questions. The Sedgwick County Health Department is providing "fact sheets" and "updates" that help address questions and the latest information about the spread of disease.

## There are some things you should expect with Pandemic Flu

- Pandemic Flu is much more serious than seasonal flu. It will likely be more severe, more people will be infected and it will be deadlier than seasonal flu.
- Vaccinations will likely not be available when it first occurs. Once the flu strain is identified, it could take several months to develop and produce large quantities of vaccine.
- Everyday life will be disrupted. Because a flu pandemic could impact up to 40% of the population, many services may be disrupted. This could include services provided by local governments, utilities, stores, mail delivery and other businesses. In addition, schools and other large gathering places may be closed.
- "Work" life will be disrupted. Businesses may be closed or employees may be asked to work from home to reduce the spread of infection.
- There are simple steps to prepare – learn how to stay healthy, reduce the spread of disease, stock your home with food and supplies and make an emergency plan.

## FOR MORE INFO:

Sedgwick County Health Department  
[www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org) - 316-660-7300 (voice)

Kansas Department of Health and Environment  
[www.kdheks.gov/flu/pandemic\\_influenza.htm](http://www.kdheks.gov/flu/pandemic_influenza.htm)  
785-296-1500 (voice)

Department of Health and Human  
Services/Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention - [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov)  
800-CDC-INFO (voice), 888-232-6348 (TTY)

US Department of Homeland Security  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) - 800-BE-READY (voice)  
301-589-3006 (TTY)

# BE HEALTHY



Eat a balanced diet, exercise and get plenty of rest to keep yourself healthy.

- Stay home from work, school or large gathering places when you are sick.
- Stay away from others as much as possible when they are sick. Separate sick family members from others in the home as much as possible.
- Wash your hands frequently! Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner. Teach your children to wash hands often to avoid spreading germs.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or your mouth without first washing your hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or your shoulder, instead of your hands.
- Throw away used tissues immediately! Then wash your hands well!
- Wash bed linens and other laundry in warm or cold water with detergent. Change hand and bath towels often. Wash your hands after handling the dirty laundry.
- Clean counters and other areas of the home regularly using household cleaning products.



## Mental Health Information

Pandemic influenza has the potential to be traumatic for families and our community. Traumatic events also affect survivors, the rescue and healthcare workers, friends and relatives of victims who have been involved. A person's response may include:

- Fear, grief, depression, guilt
- Nausea, dizziness, change in appetite or sleep patterns
- Nightmares, confusion, irritability
- Withdrawal from activities, increased alcohol consumption, questioning one's beliefs, loss of meaning and purpose

These reactions may last a few days, weeks or months. With support of loved ones, the stress reactions may pass more quickly. However, professional help is available. For a fact sheet about "Coping with Traumatic Events," visit [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org), or 24-hour crisis help is available through COMCARE of Sedgwick County at 316-660-7500.

## SYMPTOMS OF INFLUENZA

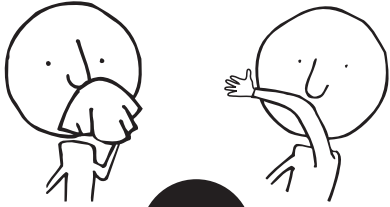
- Sudden onset of illness
- Headache
- Feeling of weakness and/or exhaustion
- Fever higher than 100.4
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea, vomiting abdominal pain
- Chills
- Stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Cough

[WWW.SEDGWICKCOUNTY.ORG](http://WWW.SEDGWICKCOUNTY.ORG)

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

## COVER YOUR COUGH

with a tissue or your elbow



&



throw your used tissue away

## WASH YOUR HANDS

with soap and warm water



OR



an alcohol-based hand sanitizer

## WHEN YOU ARE SICK



stay home from work or school

# BE PREPARED

STORE WATER, FOOD AND ESSENTIALS



**Water:** Store water in plastic containers. Plan for one gallon of water per person, per day. (2 quarts for drinking, and 2 quarts for food preparation and sanitation.) Keep at least a weeks-supply, and change your supply every 90 days.



**Food:** Store a weeks-supply of non-perishable food. You'll want items that require no refrigeration, little preparation and little or no water.

### Examples of Nonperishable Food Items

- Canned meats
- Canned fruits, vegetables, soups, juices
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Dried fruit
- Peanut butter and crackers
- Nuts or trail mix
- Comfort food (cookies, candy, coffee, tea)
- Baby formula/baby food

### Examples of Other Essentials

- Disposable diapers
- Flashlight
- Portable radio or tv
- Batteries
- Manual can opener
- Plastic trash bags
- Tissues and toilet paper
- Personal hygiene supplies
- Supplies for disabled
- Pet food, cat litter
- Cash



### Store medical and health supplies

- Prescriptions and medical supplies
- Soap and water
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Fever and pain medicines (ibuprofen, acetaminophen)
- Diarrhea remedies
- Throat lozenges
- Cough syrup
- Thermometer
- Vitamins
- Fluids with electrolytes



### Make a plan

- Prepare to stay at home. If you are sick or you need to care for family members, you may not be able to work. Know your workplace policies about sick leave and absences or the ability to work from home.
- Know your school/daycare policies about illness. You should be prepared for school closures. Who will take care of your children if you work and school is closed?
- Talk with your friends and neighbors – make sure they have a plan, and make sure they know your plan. Be ready to help neighbors who are elderly or have special needs if services they depend on are not available.
- Know how to prevent the spread of illness. Teach your children now to wash hands frequently with soap and warm water!

GETTING INFORMED AND BEING PREPARED IS OUR BEST PLAN

# SEDGWICK COUNTY COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

Sedgwick County is working with federal, state and other local government agencies to prepare for a pandemic and to maintain essential health care and community services if an outbreak should occur. While a pandemic response is primarily a public health function, many agencies, organizations, and private institutions will need to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner to ensure an effective overall response in our community.

The Sedgwick County Health Department will assume primary responsibility for planning and response. In November 2005, the Health Department convened a Pandemic Influenza Work Group (PIWG) which includes:

*Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, United Way of the Plains, area hospitals/clinics, Veterans Affairs (VA), Wichita Mid-Continent Airport-Public Safety, Wichita Public Schools (USD 259), Diocese of Wichita/parochial schools, McConnell Air Force Base, University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita, Wichita State University, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, faith-based organizations, private industry, and social service organizations.*

## PANDEMIC INFLUENZA WORK GROUP

### PIWG

has helped develop our community plan, which provides for:

- Detecting and tracking suspected cases of flu
- Coordinating health care resources during an emergency
- Purchasing antiviral medication and plans for distribution, if available
- Engaging schools, businesses and other community organizations to create "Continuity of Operations Plans" and how to protect from illness
- Educating the public about preparedness
- Conducting pandemic flu exercises to test community readiness



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## THE PLAN

is a living document, incorporating new information and strategies as they develop - it is available for review on the Sedgwick County website at [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org). In addition, Sedgwick County is developing a "Continuity of Operations Plan" (COOP) for County functions, to assure that essential services will continue to be available to the public.

### BOARD OF SEDGWICK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Dave Unruh, 1st District      Tim Norton, 2nd District  
Tom Winters, 3rd District      Lucy Burnett, 4th District  
Ben Sciortino, 5th District

**William P. Buchanan, County Manager**

**Claudia Blackburn, Health Director**

### SEDGWICK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

1900 E. Ninth Street - Wichita, KS 67214  
316-660-7300 - [www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)

“BE INFORMED, BE HEALTHY AND BE PREPARED”