



FACT SHEET

What **YOU** Can Do to **PROTECT** Yourself in a **Flu Pandemic**

During a flu pandemic, most of us who get sick with the flu will take care of ourselves at home. There are some simple steps you can take to protect yourself and the people you care about.

1. Take steps to prevent the spread of flu germs

- Cover your mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands with soap and running warm water to remove germs.
- Don't share food or dishes with someone who is ill.

2. Watch out for signs of the flu

When you catch the flu it is sudden and hits hard. It begins with a headache, chills and cough followed by a high fever, muscle aches, not wanting to eat and feeling very tired. The fever can last for five days. The flu can last two weeks.

3. Learn how to treat the flu at home

There is no cure for the flu. The best you can do is rest, treat the fever and aches, and help your body fight the virus.

- Stay at home and rest until you feel better.
- Drink lots of fluids (water, juice, soup) to help bring down the fever.
- Take medicine for the fever and muscle aches: ASA (aspirin), acetaminophen, or ibuprofen. Do NOT give ASA or aspirin to children or teens with a fever.

4. Know when you need to get medical help for pandemic flu

Call a public health hotline, your doctor or local clinic for advice:

- If your symptoms get worse after a few days.
- If you have a medical condition that could be made worse by the flu.
- If your child catches pandemic flu, is very cranky, or is not drinking enough or going to the bathroom enough.

Call 911:

- If an adult has difficulty breathing, is confused, has coughed up blood, or has severe vomiting.
- If a child has fast or troubled breathing, bluish lips or skin, is drowsy and can't be roused.

We don't know what the next flu pandemic will be like. But we do know how to take care of seasonal flu. That is a good starting point. It will help us recognize and treat pandemic flu at home and decide when to call for medical help.

For more information, go to www.pandemic.cpha.ca or call 1-800-454-8302.