



Scenario 9: Pandemic Influenza Answer Key

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can provide the most up-to-date and accurate information related to [pandemic influenzas](#). Additionally, your local health department, state health department or healthcare provider can provide valuable information.
2. Vaccines are a personal choice, and this exercise does not seek to change anyone's mind on the topic. However, it is important to have the discussion with your family and loved ones to ensure all understand the pros and cons of vaccination to make this personal choice.
3. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides an online tool to assist you with locating and accessing your electronic health records. This tool may be accessed at <https://www.healthit.gov/patients-families/blue-button/about-blue-button>. The Blue Button symbol signifies that a site has functionality for customers to go online and download health records. You can use your health data to improve your health, and to have more control over your personal health information and your family's healthcare.
4. Talk to your family and loved ones now about what to do if they get sick. Some suggestions include:
 - Stay home from work and school, and postpone running errands, when possible. This will help you rest and help prevent others from getting sick.
 - Keep your distance from others when sick to help protect them from getting sick.
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
 - Drink plenty of fluids, rest, and follow your doctor's orders.
 - Go to the hospital if your condition worsens or persists.

Some ways to lessen your chances of becoming ill include:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread easily through these routes.
 - Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active if possible, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.
 - Additional information about influenza preparedness may be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/planning-preparedness/index.html>.
5. If a family member or loved one becomes sick, take the following actions:
 - Avoid direct contact with them.
 - Encourage them to stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever will likely be lessened by fever-reducing medications; ensure that your loved one is feeling well enough to go to the doctor.
 - Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects in their vicinity.
 - If applicable, find out what plans your child's school, child care program, or college has that would manage an outbreak of flu and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
 6. At the very minimum, your family emergency kit should include the following items: water (one gallon per person, per day) and/or water purification tablets, a first-aid kit, a flashlight, batteries, a hand-crank/solar powered radio, nonperishable food, medications/prescription glasses, baby food, formula, diapers, cash (in small denominations), a wrench (to turn off utilities), hand sanitizer, a Mylar blanket, ear plugs, and a book and/or deck of cards. Consider having a kit for your pet(s), if applicable.

This may include having items and services in place *before* it becomes necessary to go to a shelter. If a loved one is comforted by a certain item (a blanket, photograph, stuffed animal, etc.), be sure to pack the item when evacuating. If a relative requires regularly scheduled medical visits, such as psychotherapy, make sure that his/her mental health provider is aware of the location of the shelter .



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7. Pandemics and epidemics are different in several important ways. A **pandemic** is a global wave of a virus; for influenza, this is the A virus. The virus that infects people in pandemics is typically very different from seasonal flu viruses. Pandemics are extremely rare and have only occurred 4 times in the last century. An **epidemic** is a national wave of a virus; for example, if the virus is contained solely to the United States. Epidemics are much more common, happening on a yearly basis between December-February in the United States.

Pandemics are extremely dangerous, because they can have a severe effect on medical infrastructure when a high number of people fall ill at once. The U.S. government has a limited stockpile of pre-pandemic flu vaccines, but it is possible that vaccines may not be available as a pandemic begins, due to high demand. The CDC recommends **two** dosages of pre-pandemic vaccine in order to build immunity.

Pandemics have a much more profound effect than epidemics. Rates of hospitalizations and medical visits can skyrocket during a pandemic, with many more people falling ill than in epidemics. For this reason, it is even more important to take preventative measures to protect yourself and your loved ones during a pandemic. Additionally, pandemics can have serious impacts on the general public – travel restrictions, quarantines, or even impact on global economy.

For more information on pandemic influenza, please visit these websites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/basics/about.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/basics/past-pandemics.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/national-strategy/severity-assessment-framework.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/national-strategy/intervals-framework.html>