

## Pandemic Influenza

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza A virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity in the human population and the virus begins to cause serious illness and then spreads easily person-to-person worldwide. New Mexico has been planning since early 2006 for a coordinated response to a pandemic event.

If a pandemic occurs, it is likely to be a prolonged and widespread outbreak that could require temporary changes in schools, work, transportation and other public services. To be prepared for such an emergency, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services encourages individuals, businesses and communities to:

Talk with your local public health officials and health care providers, who can supply information about the signs and symptoms of a specific disease outbreak and recommend prevention and control actions.

Adopt business/school practices that encourage sick employees/students to stay home and anticipate how to function with a significant portion of the workforce/school population absent due to illness or caring for ill family members.

Take common-sense steps to stop the spread of germs including frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes and staying away from others as much as possible when you are sick.

Stay informed about pandemic influenza and be prepared to respond. Consult [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) frequently for updates on national and international information on pandemic influenza. ■



# Global Disease

## What are your Risks?