

Pandemic Information

Why Are We Hearing So Much About A 'Flu Pandemic'?

Influenza pandemics – worldwide outbreaks – occur when all four of the following occur:

- A new influenza A virus is detected. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus appears and the human population has no or little immunity, resulting in several, simultaneous epidemics worldwide with enormous numbers of death and illness.
- Human-to-human transmission happens easily. With the increase in global transportation and communications, as well as urbanization and overcrowded conditions, epidemics of a new influenza virus are likely to spread quickly around the world.
- The new virus cause serious clinical illness and death. Outbreaks of influenza in animals, especially when happening simultaneously with outbreaks in human, increase the chance of a pandemic, through the merging of animal and human viruses.
- The population has little or no immunity to the virus. A vaccine will not be available at the start of the pandemic as the virus will be new.

For more information on Pandemic Levels visit:

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/frequently_asked_questions/levels_pandemic_alert/en/

