



Pandemic Flu Information

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

For More Information:

www.montcopa.org

**Montgomery County
Health Department**
610-278-5117

**Montgomery County
Department of Public
Safety**
610-631-6500

**Centers for Disease Control
& Prevention**
800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
888-232-6348 TTY
E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov

Centers for Disease Control
& Prevention
[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dg/
isolationquarantine.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dg/isolationquarantine.htm)

No one really knows when or if the avian flu will become a worldwide epidemic, or pandemic. Pandemic diseases have occurred periodically throughout human history. Since we know that, **we have an advantage: We can plan for the next one, whenever it might be.**

In the years since past pandemics, public health officials have vastly improved our ability to detect and control infectious diseases, and we've become more vigilant. **We'll know when a new and serious strain of flu emerges, and we'll be able to take precautions to reduce its impacts.**

Public health officials worldwide have been preparing for a pandemic flu for several years. Montgomery County has a Pandemic Flu Response Plan that addresses the actions we've taken to prepare for a pandemic, as well as the actions we'll take to respond to one. Although a pandemic flu would present many challenges for our citizens and for our health-care system, the goal of our plan is to minimize the impacts of pandemic disease on Pennsylvanians.

No one knows for sure how serious a worldwide avian flu outbreak would be--or even whether avian flu will be the next pandemic. But scientists and government officials believe it could pose a serious threat to our health, our economy, and our way of life. **It's something that we all need to take seriously and plan for.**

No one knows how many people might die of a pandemic flu. Estimates of casualties are just that--estimates. They often represent a worst-case scenario. However, estimates are useful in that they can help health officials determine the level of planning we need to engage in.

The general public can do something now to prepare themselves and their families for a possible pandemic flu. They can:

- **Become more diligent about good hygiene.** Washing your hands regularly is one of the best ways to protect yourself against any kind of infectious disease. It will become even more important during a pandemic, so it's a good idea to develop the habit now. The same goes for coughing into a tissue or your sleeve instead of into your

hands, and keeping your hands away from your nose and mouth. Get used to doing these now so they'll be second nature if and when a pandemic occurs.

- **Do all they can to improve their health.** The healthier you are, the more resistant your body is to disease. So it's a better time than ever to quit smoking, improve your eating habits, exercise regularly, and get regular medical checkups and recommended immunizations.