



# PANDEMIC INFLUENZA FACTS

## WHAT IS INFLUENZA?

- Influenza is caused by a virus, not a bacteria
- It results in lung congestion, coughing, and potentially pneumonia
- Antibiotics will not help

## PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

- “Pandemic” means “world wide”
- Starts with a new virus (disease)—never before been in humans
- Causes serious, life threatening illness
- Easily spreads from human to human

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

- Seasonal flu is a milder virus in humans with some immunity
- Pandemic flu is a serious virus in humans with no immunity
- “Stomach flu” is not influenza

Flu is passed from person to person via droplets from coughs or sneezes. The flu virus can live for a long time (some can live for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, light switches and tables).

**Practicing good hygiene** is the most important thing you can do to help prevent the spread of the flu.



### **Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough**

Cough or sneeze into a tissue (not a cloth handkerchief) and then throw it away. If you don't have one, use your upper sleeve – NOT your hands. Then wash your hands, every time.



### **Clean your hands often**

Wash your hands well -- with soap and warm water -- then rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all surfaces - wrists, palms, backs of hands, fingers, and under fingernails. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. The time it takes to sing Happy Birthday through 2 times or using the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, sing 2 times:

Wash hands, Wash hands, every time;

Washing hands, helps keep me fine.

Rinse hands thoroughly and turn off the faucet with a towel. When soap and water are not available use alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers.



### **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth.



**Don't share personal items:** towels and washcloths, utensils, cups, glasses, straws, or toothbrushes.