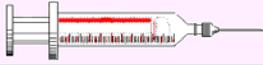


Pandemic Flu and You

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CDC Urges Universal Vaccination: Did you get your flu shot?

While a pandemic has the potential to cause tremendous impact on health and welfare, the impact of season flu can also be significant—each year seasonal flu is expected to cause 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations. Vaccination continues to be the best method of prevention. This year, an unprecedented amount of vaccine will be available. There is no longer a need to prioritize or limit vaccination. Anyone who wishes to decrease their risk of illness should receive the shot.

Help reduce the burden of disease, get a flu shot!
For vaccinations in your area, call your doctor or visit:
<http://www.lapublichealth.org/> or
<http://www.findaflushot.com/>

H5N1 Human cases, 10/17/07: Reported by WHO

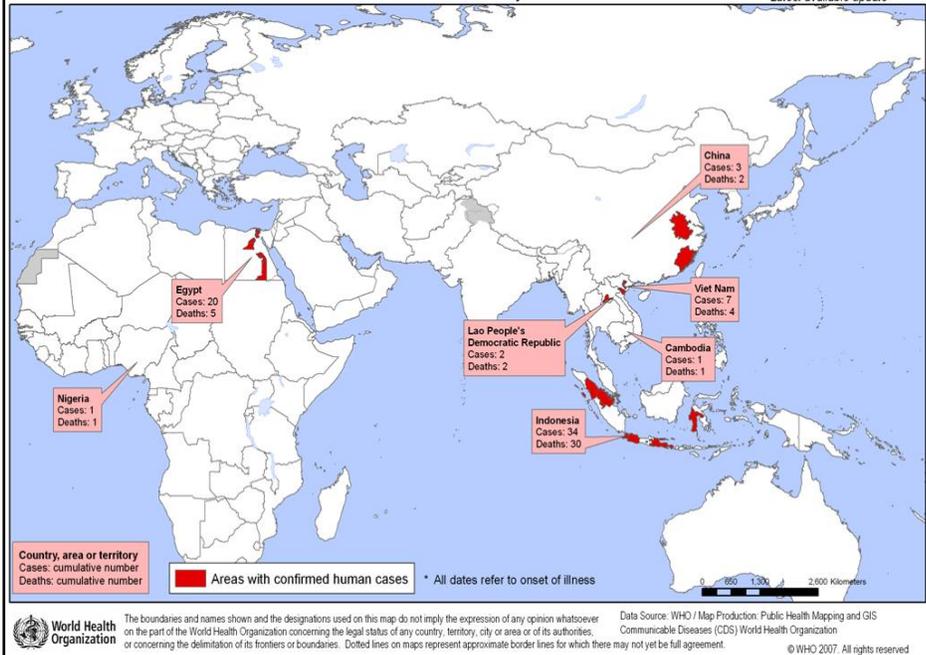
Country	2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		Total	
	cases	deaths	cases	death								
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	5	0	0	8	5
Cambodia	0	0	0	0	4	4	2	2	1	1	7	7
China	1	1	0	0	8	5	13	8	3	2	25	16
Djibouti	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Egypt	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	10	20	5	38	15
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	20	13	55	45	34	30	109	88
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	3	2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2
Nigeria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Thailand	0	0	17	12	5	2	3	3	0	0	25	17
Turkey	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	0	0	12	4
Viet Nam	3	3	29	20	61	19	0	0	7	4	100	46
Total	4	4	46	32	98	43	115	79	68	45	331	203

Status of "Bird Flu" Human Infections

Several years has passed since the first known human infection of highly pathogenic avian influenza A H5N1 (commonly known as "bird flu") was identified—and infections and deaths continue. As of October 17, 2007, WHO reports 331 cases from 12 countries, the majority of these infections were fatal (78% have died). While human infections and deaths persist, in the last six months the spread of the virus has slowed: additional cases have been identified in only 4 of the 12 countries (China, Egypt, Indonesia, and Viet Nam). And the majority of these recent cases have occurred in Indonesia; in the last six months, 70% of the new cases were identified in Indonesia (28 cases, including 25 deaths). Further examination indicates that the spread of this virus is more likely due to the illegal bird trade and improper poultry raising techniques than migratory birds, as was previously believed (see Pan Flu and You, April 2007 issue for further discussion of this shift in focus).

Areas with confirmed human cases of H5N1 avian influenza since 1 January 2007 *

Status as of 17 October 2007
Latest available update



Have we forgotten the kids? Does pandemic planning adequately address children's issues?

In October 2007, the Trust for America's Health issued a report (<http://healthyamericans.org/reports/fluchildren/>) critical of current pandemic planning efforts for neglecting issues specific to protecting the health of children. The report urges vaccine, treatment and infection control strategies targeted specifically with children in mind and better strategies to care for children should schools be dismissed.

Q: The report notes that 46% of "bird flu" deaths have occurred in children 19 years and younger. Does this mean that the next pandemic will have a greater impact on children than other groups?

A: No one knows if children will be impacted more than others during the next flu pandemic. While children are currently disproportionately affected by H5N1, their high rate of infection may be more likely the result of their level of exposure than an unusual feature of the virus—children from countries impacted by H5N1 are more likely to care for and have close contact with poultry, the predominant means of infection. It is also not clear whether H5N1 will develop into the next pandemic. However, what is known is that every year seasonal flu infection rates are highest among school-age children and adolescents. That is why the CDC urges universal vaccination for infants and children 6 months to 5 years of age children, adolescents with chronic medical problems, and their parents and teachers.

Q: What is LA County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) doing to protect children should a pandemic occur?

A: While the development of vaccines and medicines is not the responsibility of LACDPH, a priority of LACDPH's pandemic planning activities is to address the needs of special populations including those of children. LACDPH conducts seminars, readiness and outreach activities to improve pandemic and emergency preparedness throughout LA and routinely partners with school districts, child care centers and universities. Since LACDPH recognizes the importance of preparing now, not after a pandemic has begun, educational materials promoting respiratory and hand washing hygiene are available in 11 different languages, are free to the public, and have been widely distributed. In addition, LACDPH is developing pandemic flu preparedness materials specifically focused on the needs of child care providers and the families they serve.

For more information or to order materials write to: panflu@ph.lacounty.org