

Families May Plan Ahead for A Pandemic

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the CDC (Center for Disease Control) are concerned about families who have not yet prepared for the pandemic we are in currently nor the seasonal flu that will arrive this fall.

The LaPorte County Health Department reminds families that there is still time to begin preparing for pandemic and seasonal flu now.

Paul Trost, Administrator of the LaPorte County Health Department, said, "Families should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions can be taken to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic. This checklist from the CDC will help families gather the information and resources they may need in case of a flu pandemic."

To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the correct behavior.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.
- Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

- Examples of food and non-perishables
 - Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
 - Protein or fruit bars
 - Dry cereal or granola
 - Peanut butter or nuts
 - Dried fruit
 - Crackers
 - Canned juices
 - Bottled water
 - Canned and jarred baby food and formula
 - Pet food
 - Other non-perishable foods
- Examples of medical, health and emergency supplies
 - Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
 - Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash
 - Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
 - Thermometer
 - Anti-diarrheal medication
 - Vitamins
 - Fluids with electrolytes
 - Cleansing agents, soaps
 - Flashlight
 - Batteries
 - Portable radio
 - Manual can opener
 - Garbage bags
 - Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

For more information about planning for a pandemic or for the seasonal flu, please contact the LaPorte County Health Department at these locations:

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