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Week 28 of 52: Pandemic Preparedness

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On December 16, 2011 @ 3:17 pm

Category: 52 Weeks to Preparedness

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According to the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) ^[1], serious, contagious disease outbreaks can and do happen. CDC investigates new contagious diseases—averaging one new contagion per year. Given our vast array of transportation systems, these diseases can end up at our doorstep far more rapidly compared to any other time in recorded history. Since pandemics are fast moving, vaccinations would be useless.

When an outbreak occurs, those living in cities, and those living in close proximity of others will be more at risk. Statistics from previous pandemics indicate that 30–60 percent of the population will contract an illness. Any pregnant women, infants, elderly people, or those with chronic medical conditions are also at risk and could be the first of the population to contract the contagious illness.

When the pandemic begins, many will remain in a state of denial about any approaching epidemics and not want to think of the long lasting repercussions of such a disaster. Being prepared before the mass come out of their daze will ensure that you are better prepared before the hoards run to the store to stock up.

Having first hand knowledge of the [government's protocols](#) ^[2] before this type of emergency arises can help put you ahead of the game. Understanding that our lives will change drastically if the population is faced with a pandemic and being prepared for this can help you make better choices toward the well being of your family. Some changes could be:

- Challenges or shut downs of business commerce
- Breakdown of our basic infrastructure: communications, mass transportation, supply chains
- Payroll service interruptions
- Staffing shortages in hospitals and medical clinics
- Interruptions in public facilities – Schools, workplaces may close, and public gatherings such as sporting events or worship services may close temporarily.
- Government mandated voluntary or involuntary home quarantine.

With any type of disaster or emergency, the responsibility falls more heavily upon our shoulders to ensure that we are able meet our needs. However, this is not anything new to a prepper. We believe in being self reliant, and if you have followed the [52-Weeks to Preparedness series](#) ^[3], you should well be on your way to handle such a disaster.

So how do we prepare properly for this type of emergency? Similar to other emergencies we simply prepare as much as we can because any steps taken toward preparedness are better than none at all. Here are a few ideas to consider on how to better prepare for family for this type of emergency:

1. Taking proper illness precautions – avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes during any pandemic.
2. Create a [sick room](#) ^[4] for the home.
3. Keep your immune systems up by getting lots of sleep, having a good diet and taking vitamins and antioxidants to protect your health.
4. Stay inside and avoid contact with others.

Some of the following suggestions to purchase have been repeated in previous newsletters. Ensure that you have these items on hand in order to prepare for this type of emergency. To read more about pandemic preparedness, [click here](#) ^[5].

Preps To Buy:

- Have a two-week supply of emergency foods that require no refrigeration.
- Store 1 gallon of water per person per day, in clean plastic containers. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.
- Supply of nonprescription drugs
- Pain relievers
- Cold medicines
- Decongestants
- Stomach remedies
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Vitamins that have immune boosting enhancers.
- Fluids with [electrolytes](#) ^[6] (such as sports drinks).
- Bleach or disinfectant
- Tissues
- Garbage bags to collect soiled clothing and bedding before they are washed.
- A thermometer
- Latex cleaning gloves
- Disposable gloves (in quantity)
- Soap
- Hand wipes
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers or homemade [hand sanitizer supplies](#) ^[7]
- An extra supply of your regular prescription drugs and medical supplies.
- N95 respirator masks (in quantity)

Action Items:

1. Understand your communities role in pandemic preparedness. Find out ahead of time what your community's protocols are in the case of a sudden onset pandemic.
2. For those with special needs, ensure that you have supplies ready for them (infants, elderly, handicapped, etc.).
3. Plan accordingly for [pets](#) ^[8] as well.
4. Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they became ill.
5. Finding out your employer's plans and ask your child's school or day care what their protocol is during epidemic outbreaks.
6. Have some supplies prepared in your workplace.
7. Identify how you can get information, whether through local radio, TV, Internet or other sources.

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URL to article: http://readynutrition.com/resources/week-28-of-52-pandemic-preparedness_16122011/

URLs in this post:

[1] Center for Disease Control (CDC):

http://www.pandemicflu.gov/news/contagion_outbreakcontrol.html

[2] government's protocols: http://www.flu.gov/professional/federal/prep_act.html

[3] 52-Weeks to Preparedness series: http://readynutrition.com/resources/52-weeks-to-preparedness-an-introduction_19072011/

[4] sick room: http://readynutrition.com/resources/the-well-stocked-sick-room_08122011/

[5] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/are-you-ready-series-pandemic-preparedness_14122011/

[6] electrolytes: http://readynutrition.com/resources/diy-electrolyte-powders_21062011/

[7] hand sanitizer supplies: http://readynutrition.com/resources/homemade-hand-sanitizer_21042011/

[8] pets: http://readynutrition.com/resources/pet-care_27052011/

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