



Important information about pandemic flu

February 2007

Dear Child Care Provider,

This packet of information provides you with some practical tools to prepare for a pandemic flu outbreak. A “pandemic” is a serious disease that spreads around the world and affects a large number of people. Right now there is no pandemic flu in the United States. **The material about pandemic flu preparation will also be helpful in preparing for any disaster, including earthquakes and preventing the spread of any infectious diseases.**

Each year, a large number of people get sick with seasonal flu; 30,000 people in the United States die from seasonal flu. Flu vaccines are effective ways to prevent people from getting sick with seasonal flu and **are recommended for all children from 6 months to 5 years and their care providers.**

Currently there is also an avian/bird flu (H5 N1) virus in birds circulating in several countries. It is not in the United States now. When cases of flu in birds are identified in the United States, there may be confusion and concern. However, presence of the virus in birds doesn’t necessarily mean there will be human cases. There also is no conclusive evidence that the disease spreads easily from person-to-person.

At some point, whether it is the H5N1 virus or another virus, health experts believe that there will be a new virus that spreads easily among people for which most people have no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. When that happens and people begin to get sick from the virus, we will have a pandemic flu.

There is a great deal of planning for this pandemic underway at the federal, state and local level. The tools in this packet will help you and your parents begin your preparations. **A Spanish-language version of this kit is available by calling by Ruth Fernández at 925-942-3413.**

Please help us educate parents and children about the importance of preparation. Please call me if you have any questions or need additional copies of some of the materials.

Sincerely,

Francie Wise
Communicable Disease Programs Chief

P.S. Please keep this tool kit available as we will be adding additional information to help you.

