

# Establish Healthy Habits Now to Prevent Flu and Other Illness

### PRACTICE GOOD HEALTH HABITS

If you are concerned about the news stories you've heard about a potential influenza pandemic, establishing good health habits now can help your body stay healthy and fight off the flu and other illness.

- Eat a balanced diet including plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grain products.
- Drink plenty of water and go easy on salt, sugar, alcohol and saturated fat.
- Exercise regularly. Thirty or more minutes of physical activity most days of the week can help boost your immunity.
- Get plenty of rest. Sleep is shown to help your body fight off illness.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread this way.
- Stay away from people who are sick as much as you can.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school.

# **WASH YOUR HANDS**

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

# Washing with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. This is about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice through.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. Sharing cloth towels can spread germs. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

**Remember:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer to clean hands.

# When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until dry.

# When should you wash your hands?

- Before preparing or eating food.
- After going to the bathroom.
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom.
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- After handling an animal or animal waste.
- After handling garbage.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.

# RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Throw out used tissues in the trash as soon as you can.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- If you cough or sneeze into your hand, wash your hands.
- If you are not near soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, rubbing hands until dry.

# **GET INFORMED**

To see what the State of Ohio is doing to prepare for a pandemic visit <a href="http://www.ohiopandemicflu.gov">http://www.ohiopandemicflu.gov</a>. This inter-agency Web site includes many resources for Ohioans:

- Planning resources for Ohio's families, schools, businesses, communities, health care providers and local governments.
- Fact sheets, questions and answers, multi-media files, brochures and more.
- Quarterly planning newsletters subscribe here.

For more information on national pandemic flu planning, visit the U.S. Health and Human Services Web site <a href="http://www.pandemicflu.gov">http://www.pandemicflu.gov</a>. This Web site includes some of the following resources:

- Planning checklists.
- Family emergency health information sheet.
- Emergency contacts form.
- Strategies to mitigate pandemics.

The World Health Organization Web site <a href="http://www.who.int/en/">http://www.who.int/en/</a> provides updates on avian influenza around the world in several languages. Other resources include:

- Advice for travelers.
- Frequently asked questions.
- Industry guidelines.