



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY - EUROPE
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
PATCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
UNIT 30401
APO AE 09107**



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Dear Parents,

This letter will help your family prepare for a flu pandemic should it happen in our Stuttgart community. As you are probably aware, on June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization signaled that a global pandemic of Novel Influenza A (H1N1/Swine Flu) was underway by raising the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6. This action was a reflection of the spread of the new H1N1 virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus. At the time, more than 70 countries had reported cases of Novel Influenza A infection and there were ongoing community level outbreaks of Novel Influenza A in multiple parts of the world.

We are prepared during this new school year to take the appropriate actions to help safeguard the health and well-being of your children. These actions will range from common sense steps to help prevent the spread of the flu to unlikely temporary school closures in the event of a widespread and prolonged flu pandemic. *Our Stuttgart Garrison Commander and military health officials would make decisions on any school closures as part of a community-wide response to the pandemic flu.*

Public health officials want people to protect themselves against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to protect your family:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Do not send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.
- Following this letter is a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic flu outbreak. This information can also help your family get ready for any kind of emergency.

If you have questions, please contact our school nurse, KN. You can call the school at 0711 680 5200 or visit the community website <http://www.stuttgart.army.mil/sites/local/>. The federal government website with information on planning for individuals and families is <http://www.pandemicflu.gov> and the American Red Cross is <http://www.redcross.org>.

Robert Allen
Robert Allen, Principal

Checklist for Individuals and Families

1. To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a 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.
- Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- 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.

2. 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.

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

Examples of food and non-perishables

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and soups
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter or nuts
- Dried fruit
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Bottled water
- Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- Pet food

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- Soap and water, or alcohol-based hand wash
- Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- Thermometer
- Anti-diarrheal medication
- Fluids with electrolytes
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Portable radio
- Manual can opener
- Garbage bags
- Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers

Health Tips for During a Flu Pandemic

1. Plan for an extended stay at home during a flu pandemic.

- Ask your chain of command about how business will continue during a pandemic.
- Ask your chain of command if you can work from home during a flu pandemic.
- Plan for a possible reduction or loss of income, if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- Check with your employer or union about leave policies.
- Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand.
- Plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.

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

Examples: Non-perishable foods Health and emergency supplies

Ready to eat canned meats, prescribed medical supplies such as fruits, vegetables, soups, glucose and blood pressure monitoring, protein or fruit bars, soap and water or alcohol based hand wash, dry cereal or granola Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen, peanut butter and jelly, Tylenol, Motrin, dried fruit, nuts, trail mix, Thermometer, crackers, vitamins, canned juices, fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte, bottled water, flashlight with extra batteries, canned or jarred baby food, portable radio with extra batteries, baby formula, manual can opener, pet food, garbage bags, tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers. These are just examples, an actual list could be more extensive.

3. If someone in your home develops flu symptoms (fever, cough, muscle aches):

- Encourage plenty of fluids to drink.
- Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For adults with fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (aspirin).
- Do not use aspirin in children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
- Sponging with tepid (wrist-temperature) water lowers fever only during the period of sponging. Do not sponge with alcohol.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag for their disposal within reach of the patient.

- All members of the household should wash their hands frequently.
- Keep other family members and visitors away from the person who is ill.
- Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact the healthcare provider right away.

4. Protect yourself against the spread of the flu and other germs and viruses:

- The main way illnesses like the flu and the common cold spread is by tiny droplets sprayed into the air when someone coughs or sneezes. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing. Throw away used tissues immediately.
- Wash hands thoroughly and often. That means using soap and warm water and washing for 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when hand washing is not possible.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when you touch something contaminated with germs. Germs can live for two hours or more on surfaces like doorknobs, desks or chairs.
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.

Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/> for more information.

5. If you do come down with a cold or the flu, take these steps to get well:

- Wash your hands often.
- Stay home and keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick, too.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink lots of fluids like water, tea, broth or juice.
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen as needed for pain or fever.
- Use a vaporizer or saline drops to relieve congestion.

Pandemic Influenza: Health Tips at: <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/>