

What Can We Learn from Previous Pandemics?

A HISTORICAL VIEW

An influenza pandemic is a rare but recurrent event. Three influenza pandemics occurred in the previous century: "Spanish Influenza" in 1918, "Asian Influenza" in 1957, and "Hong Kong Influenza" in 1968.

INFLUENZA PANDEMICS IN THE 20TH CENTURY				21ST CENTURY
When?	1918 "Spanish Influenza"	1957 "Asian Influenza"	1968 "Hong Kong Influenza"	We are in Phase 5 of the Pandemic Alert Period, but things can change rapidly....
How Many Deaths?	40-50 million deaths worldwide	2 million deaths worldwide	1 million deaths worldwide	?
What kind of virus?	A more virulent form of the influenza virus	Milder virus than the one responsible for the 1918 pandemic	Even milder virus than the Asian Influenza virus	?
Who was Most Affected?	Fatalities occurred in previously healthy people 15-35 years of age	Deaths occurred in persons with underlying disease conditions	Deaths occurred in persons with underlying disease conditions	?
What About Prevention and Medical treatment?	An effective influenza vaccine was not available until 1933	Vaccines and antiviral medication were available but supplies were not adequate to meet need	Vaccines and antiviral medication were available but supplies were not adequate to meet need	Vaccines will not be available until they can be matched to the pandemic virus. Antivirals are available, but may not reach all parts of the world.

Historically, the number of deaths during a pandemic has varied greatly. Variations were seen in mortality, severity of illness, and patterns of disease spread due to:

- The short time between the two pandemics in 1957 and 1968.
- Viruses seemed to be less virulent than the one responsible for the 1918 "Spanish Influenza" virus.
- The world was much better prepared to cope during the Asian and Hong Kong Influenza Pandemics because of past experience.



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GET READY NOW!