



CORONADO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Summer Quarter 2006
July, August, September

Fire Division Chief Alan Nowakowski
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Pandemic

The eyes of public health officials have recently shifted to Turkey, where the first human cases of avian influenza in Europe were detected. Investigators wonder whether the spread of the disease from its original East Asia bastion signals that the bird flu, as it is popularly known, will develop into a widespread pandemic.

An influenza pandemic involves a global outbreak of disease that occurs when a new virus appears in the human population, causes serious illness and then spreads globally from person to person. Thus far, the evidence shows that avian influenza has been spread only from bird-to-human contact.

Overdue for the Pandemic Flu

Experts are on the lookout for an influenza pandemic because, simply put, it's been a while since we've had one. During the 20th Century, pandemics appeared every 30 years or so. The last influenza pandemic was the 1968-1969 Hong Kong flu, which killed 34,000 in the United States. That virus, detected in Hong Kong in early 1968 before spreading to the United States, still circulates among humans today in the form of the less dangerous seasonal flu.

What's Happening Now?

Avian influenza actually includes several related virus strains. Health professionals are concerned that the continued spread of a highly pathogenic avian H5N1 virus across eastern Asia and other countries represents a significant threat to human health. The H5N1 virus has raised concerns about a potential human pandemic because:

- It is especially virulent
- It is being spread by migratory birds
- It can be transmitted from birds to mammals and in some limited circumstances to humans, and
- Like other influenza viruses, it continues to evolve.

Since 2003, a growing number of human H5N1 cases have been reported in Africa, Asia, and Europe. More than half of the people infected with the H5N1 virus have died. Most of these cases are believed to have been caused by exposure to infected poultry. There has been no sustained human-to-human transmission of the disease, but the concern is that H5N1 will evolve into a virus capable of human-to-human transmission.

Avian Influenza Viruses

Avian (bird) flu is caused by influenza A viruses that occur naturally among birds. There are different subtypes of these viruses because of changes in certain proteins (hemagglutinin [HA] and neuraminidase [NA] on the surface of the influenza A virus and the way the proteins combine. Each combination represents a different subtype.

Avian Influenza in Birds

Wild birds worldwide carry avian influenza viruses in their intestines, but usually do not get sick from them. Avian influenza is very contagious among birds and can make some domesticated birds, including chickens, ducks, and turkeys very sick and kill them.

Infected birds shed influenza virus in their saliva, nasal secretions, and feces. Domesticated birds may become infected with avian influenza virus through direct contact with infected waterfowl or other infected poultry, or through contact with surfaces (such as dirt or cages) or materials (such as water or feed) that have been contaminated with the virus.

Avian influenza infection in domestic poultry causes two main forms of disease that are distinguished by low and high extremes of virulence. The "low pathogenic" form may go undetected and usually causes only mild symptoms (such as ruffled feathers

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For CPR and CERT classes,
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and a drop in egg production). However, the highly pathogenic form spreads more rapidly through flocks of poultry. This form may cause disease that affects multiple internal organs and has a mortality rate that can reach 90-100%, often within 48 hours. The H5N1 virus is highly pathogenic.

Human Infection with Avian Influenza Viruses

“Human influenza virus” usually refers to those subtypes that spread widely among humans. There are only three known A subtypes of influenza viruses (H1N1, H1N2, H3N2) currently circulating among humans. It is likely that some genetic parts of current human influenza A viruses originally came from birds. The risk from avian influenza is generally low to most people, because the viruses do not usually infect humans. H5N1 is one of the few avian influenza viruses to have crossed the species barrier to infect humans, and it is the most deadly of those that have crossed the barrier.

Most cases of H5N1 influenza infection in humans have resulted from contact with infected poultry (e.g., domesticated chicken, ducks, and turkeys) or surfaces contaminated with secretion/excretions from infected birds.

Because these viruses do not commonly infect humans, there is little or no immune protection against them in the human population. If H5N1 virus were to gain the capacity to spread easily from person to person, a pandemic could begin. No one can predict when a pandemic might occur. However, experts from around the world are watching the H5N1 situation very closely and are preparing for the possibility that the virus may begin to spread more easily and widely from person to person. There currently is no commercially available vaccine to protect humans against H5N1 virus that is being seen in Asia, Europe, and Africa. A pandemic vaccine cannot be produced until a new pandemic influenza virus emerges and is identified.

Pandemic Influenza – Prevention and Treatment Stay Healthy

These steps may help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses such as the flu:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze-throw the tissue away immediately after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use an alcohol-based (60-90%) hand cleaner.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

Flu Terms Defined

Seasonal (or common) flu is a respiratory illness that can be transmitted person to person. Most people have some immunity, and a vaccine is available.

Avian (or bird) flu is caused by influenza viruses that occur naturally among wild birds. The H5N1 variant is deadly to domestic fowl and can be transmitted from birds to humans. There is no human immunity and no vaccine is available.

Pandemic flu is a virulent human flu that causes a global outbreak, or pandemic, of serious illness. Because there is little natural immunity, the disease can spread easily from person to person.

Currently, there is no pandemic flu.

- If you get the flu, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings. In this way you will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.

Vaccination

Vaccines are used to protect people from contracting a virus once a particular threat is identified. Once a pandemic influenza virus has been identified, it will likely take 4-5 months to develop, test, and begin producing a vaccine. While there is currently no human pandemic influenza in the world, the federal government is facilitating production of vaccines for several existing avian influenza viruses. These vaccines may supply some protection should one of these viruses change and cause an influenza pandemic.

Antivirals

A number of antiviral drugs are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat and prevent seasonal influenza.

Some of these antiviral medications may be effective in treating pandemic influenza. These drugs are available by prescription only.

Some Questions and Answers

Is it safe to eat poultry?

Yes, it is safe to eat properly cooked poultry. Cooking destroys germs, including bird flu viruses. The United States maintains trade restrictions on the importation of poultry and poultry products from countries where the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza strain has been detected in commercial or traditionally raised poultry, not in wild or migratory birds.

Guidelines for the safe preparation of poultry include the following:

- Wash hands before and after handling food.
- Keep raw poultry and its juices away from other foods.
- Keep hands, utensils, and surfaces, such as cutting boards, clean.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached the safe internal temperature – in all parts of the bird. Cook poultry to at least 165°F.

What types of birds can carry bird flu viruses?

Avian influenza viruses can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl, as well as a wide variety of other birds, including migratory waterfowl. Each year, there is a flu season for birds just as there is for humans and, as with people, some forms of the flu are worse than others, depending on how strong the virus is. A weak virus may cause only mild illness in infected poultry and birds but a strong virus could cause severe and extremely contagious illness, and even death, among infected poultry and birds.

Will the seasonal flu shot protect me against pandemic influenza?

- No, it won't protect you against pandemic influenza. But flu shots can help you to avoid seasonal flu.
- Get a pneumonia shot to prevent secondary infection if you are over the age of 65 or have a chronic illness such as diabetes or asthma.

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Congratulations CERT graduates of Spring 2006!



From left to right: Jim Mazurkiewicz, Doris White, Division Chief Alan Nowakowski, Howard White, Kevin Nicolls, Ann Steuer, Langdon Smith, Frank Preciado

County-wide CERT Drill

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- Make sure that your family's immunizations are up-to-date.

Other Challenges to Prepare for

Essential services you depend on may be disrupted:

- Hospitals and other healthcare facilities, banks/ATMs, restaurants, government offices, telephone and cellular phone companies, and post office.
- Stores may close or have limited supplies.
- Transportation services may be disrupted, fuel supplies limited.
- Food and water supplies may be interrupted and limited.
- Schools and daycare centers may be closed for an extended period of time.

Stay informed

- Knowing the facts is the best preparation.
- Reliable, accurate, and timely information is available at www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Another source for information is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDN): 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Excerpts from articles of "Homeland Defense" Journal by Peter A. Buxbaum; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; California Department of Food and Agriculture



Triage setup at the former Naval Training Center

On Saturday, June 3rd the Coronado Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and CERTs from throughout San Diego County participated in a disaster exercise conducted at the Regional Public Safety Training facility in San Diego. The event consisted of a simulated earthquake scenario and skill stations that provided training in the use of fire extinguishers, and lifting heavy objects using pry tools and cribbing. A highlight of the event was the San Diego Fire helicopter demonstration of medical evacuation operations. CERT members used the exercise to practice the skills they have been taught, including rescue and emergency first aid, should a crisis calling for such actions occur.



Checking and taking care of victims

Additionally the event provided an opportunity to come together with other CERT organizations and demonstrate an ability to organize and cooperate in a large scale disaster. The Coronado Emergency Radio Operators (CERO) established a field communication capability and activated the amateur radio equipment that is part of the Coronado Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This component of the exercise provided assurance that during a disaster emergency communication could be maintained using amateur radio resources, if normal channels were lost.

*Division Chief Alan Nowakowski
Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*





The City of Coronado encourages the participation of disabled individuals in this activity, services and programs provided by the City. Individuals with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate should contact: Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Officer, in the Administrative Services Department. Telephone: 619-522-7304.

Summer 2006 CPR

DATE	DAY	TIME
July 15	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
August 16	Wednesday	5:15 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.
September 9	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
September 26	Tuesday	5:15 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.

CPR classes will be held at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the Police Facility at 700 Orange Avenue. The fee of \$25.00 must be paid at the time of the class. Participants will receive an American Heart Association book and a barrier device to protect themselves when performing CPR. Please call the Fire Department for registration: 619-522-7374.

The CERT Program (Community Emergency Response Team) Summer / Fall

DATE	DAY	TIME
MODULE 1 - Disaster Preparedness		
July 29	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Oct. 11	Wednesday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MODULE 2 - Disaster Fire Suppression		
Aug. 5	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Oct. 18	Wednesday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MODULE 3 - Disaster Medical Operations		
Aug. 12	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Oct. 25	Wednesday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MODULE 4 - Light Search and Rescue Operations		
Aug. 19	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Nov. 1	Wednesday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
MODULE 5 - Terrorism / Psychology / Team Organization		
Aug. 26	Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Nov. 8	Wednesday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

There is no fee for CERT classes. Please call the Coronado Fire Department for location and registration: 619-522-7374.

Following is a brief description of the CERT classes and some of the skills that will be taught.

- Module 1 • Disaster Preparedness:** Introduction to types of disasters and the role of CERTs in a disaster.
- Module 2 • Disaster Fire Suppression:** Basic fire suppression strategy, fire fighting resources and fire fighting techniques.
- Module 3 • Disaster Medical Operations:** Treatment techniques for life-threatening conditions, principles of triage, establishing treatment areas, and more.
- Module 4 • Disaster Light Search and Rescue Operations:** Search and rescue priorities, size-up strategies, and rescuer safety.
- Module 5 • Terrorism:** Potential threats and how to identify them, CERT activation, and Preparedness in Coronado.
 - **Disaster Psychology Team Organization:** The post-disaster emotional environment, the CERT organization and decision making.

In order to receive certification all six Modules have to be completed. Module 1 must be taken first and Module 5 last.

**CERT Fans and
CERT Members:**

*There is a CERT meeting every **third Thursday** of the month at **6:00 p.m.** in the EOC at the Police Department where CERT members will receive more training and new updates on Emergency Preparedness.*

The **Emergency Preparedness Newsletter** is a publication from the Coronado Fire Department
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