

# 18. STAY WELL

## Taking precautions against the flu

### WHY ACT?

Flu at varying levels of intensity visits New York City annually. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the NYC Department of Health identify children between 6 months and 23 months of age and adults 65 years or older as high risk groups (among others) and recommend that they receive annual flu shots during October and November of each year. At the same time the current spread of bird flu threatens to become a dangerous flu pandemic. Some basic preparedness steps can provide a greater measure of protection.

### PREPAREDNESS ACTION

○ Get a flu shot.

Step 1. Determine your risk: Since annual protection for more typical flu types may provide some level of protection against a more virulent strain of the disease each New Yorker, regardless of age, should seriously consider getting an annual flu shot. For a more complete listing of high risk groups go to [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm).

Step 2. Make an appointment with your doctor or public health organization to be immunized.

○ Establish health practices that minimize your risk of getting the flu.

Step 1: Wash your hands with soap and water following social contact with others and after touching common surfaces such as mass transit poles and handles.

Step 2: Buy antiseptic wipes to clean hands when soap and water are not available.

Step 3: Eat healthy food and get plenty of sleep to keep your immune system strong.

Step 4: Buy a facemask or respirator rated at N95 for adults in your household for use when caring for members of your own family who show flu symptoms or have confirmed cases of the flu.

Step 5: Buy plastic disposable gloves for use when caring for members of your household who show flu symptoms or have confirmed cases of the flu.

- Stay at home. If an avian flu pandemic is suspected the US. Health and Human Services Agency suggests preparing to stay at home for at least two weeks.

Step 1: Purchase food and water for at least two weeks. (See food Action 1, pg. 7 – and water Action 2, pg. 9)

Step 2: If you have children, prepare to home school them for at least two weeks.

Step 3: Work at home. (See Action 25, pg. 55)

Step 4: Have at least two weeks supply of prescription medications. (See Action 15, pg. 35)

Step 5: Make a list and purchase essential personal supplies, such as soap, toilet paper, tissues, diapers if needed.

Step 6: Keep extra cash on hand

Step 7: Be prepared for sporadic power outages and reduced services. See Section 1 for preparedness actions.

## MATERIALS

All the items listed above.

## TIME

Up to a few hours to research and purchase materials. And enough time for a good night's sleep.

## RESILIENCY GAIN

The ability to reduce the spread of flu and other infectious diseases within your family even if a family members comes down with the disease. The capacity to reduce your chances of picking up the disease outside the home.