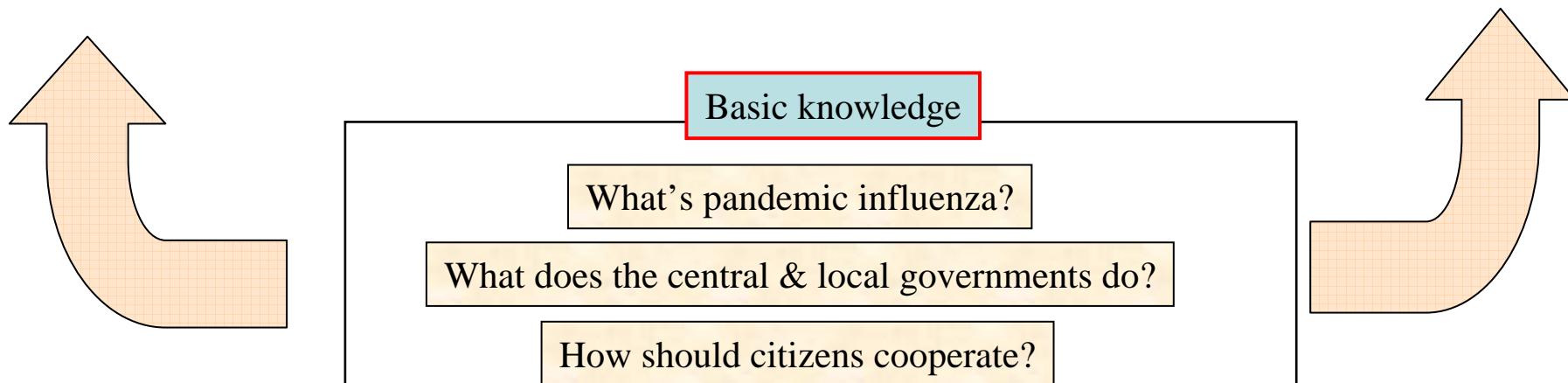
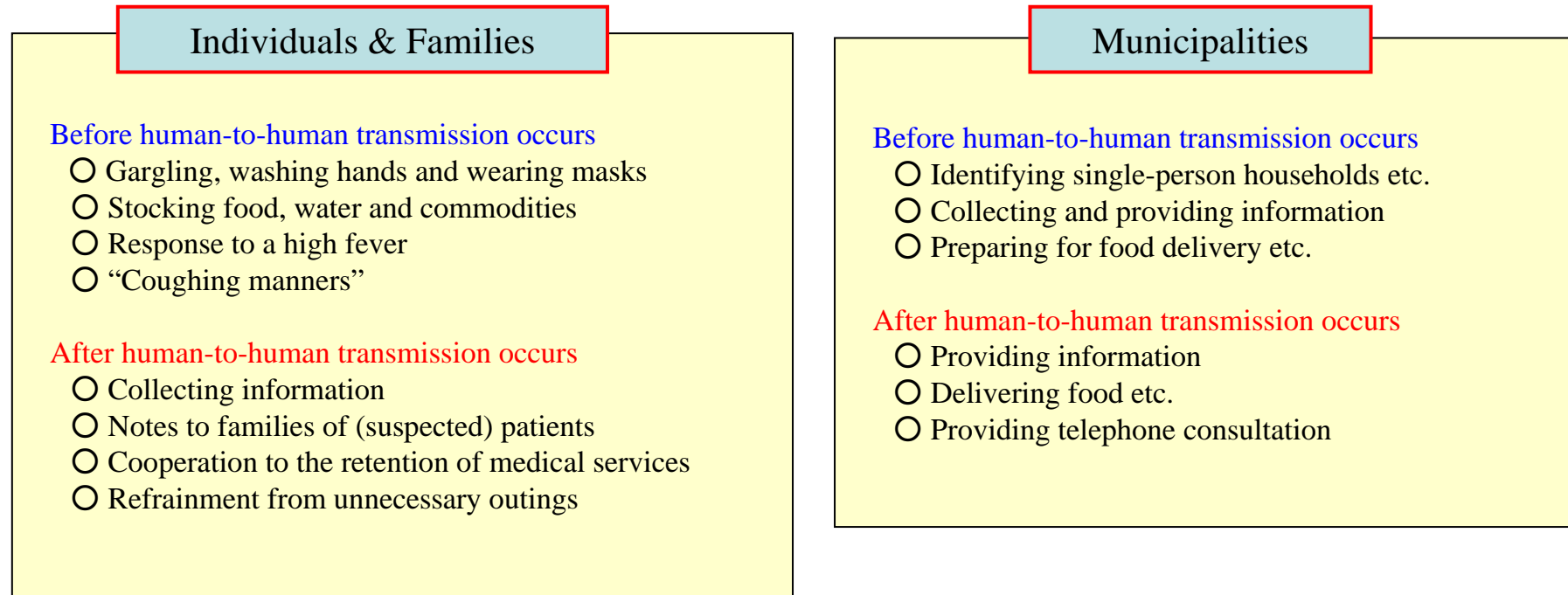


Guideline for Infection Prevention for Individuals, Families, Local Communities and Municipalities

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Pandemic Influenza Experts Advisory Committee

Guideline for Infection Prevention for Individuals, Families, Local Communities and Municipalities (Overview)



Guideline for Infection Prevention for Individuals, Families, Local Communities and Municipalities

These guidelines are formulated to provide individuals, general households, local communities and municipalities with guidance on pandemic influenza preparedness. All the people in Japan are requested to take part in pandemic influenza preparedness, with every individual and municipality cooperating in preparedness measures referring to these guidelines.

Outbreaks of pandemic influenza will not necessarily proceed as forecasted, and actual situations of pandemic will vary. Therefore, these guidelines shall be reviewed and modified as necessary in line with future developments.

1. Basic knowledge

(1) What is pandemic influenza?

- Pandemic influenza refers to diseases caused by infection by influenza virus that has become capable of infecting humans, multiplying in human bodies, and transmitting efficiently between humans, as a result of mutation from animal (particularly avian) influenza virus.
- No one can predict when pandemic influenza virus will occur. Because it is still unknown to the humankind and nobody is immune to it, the virus will transmit easily between humans and expand rapidly to a massive infection worldwide (“pandemic”).
- Spanish flu is one of the typical examples of pandemic, which occurred between 1918 and 1919, infecting 25 to 30% of the global population and killing estimated 40 million people, including 390 thousands among those of 23 million people infected in Japan. The records suggest that, once pandemic occurs, numerous people will get infected, flooding medical institutions with patients, and causing various turmoil such as difficulty in securing human resources required to sustain the life and social functions of the general public.
- Spanish flu is considered to have covered the globe in about eleven months. Today, it will take a much shorter time for pandemic virus to reach throughout the world, regardless of the location of origin, due to expanded population; concentration in urban areas; development of airplanes and other high-speed, large-capacity transportation methods; etc. At the same time, it is highly unlikely that Japan will be able to stay clear of pandemic, even if it occurs in other countries, considering the universal presence of Japanese businesses and active human exchange. That is why preparations and countermeasures are required in advance.

(2) Countermeasures at the central and local governments

- The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare enacted and published the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Action Plan in November 2005, based on the pandemic phases classified by the WHO. The Government of Japan also promotes response drills in line with this action plan. The government has also formulated guidelines for public health, medical and social responses to pandemic influenza, which include this document.
- The Government of Japan is also promoting countermeasures against the occurrence and extensive outbreak of pandemic influenza in Japan, including the stockpiling of antiviral drugs, establishing of required medical services, and production and stockpiling of pre-pandemic vaccines administered to health care workers and workers in social services etc.
- Local governments have also formulated their own pandemic preparedness action plans and manuals, based on the national action plan or using a unique format. Please refer to your local government's plans and manuals, which are published on the websites etc. of the public health departments or health centers.

(3) Cooperation of the Japanese people

- Once human-to-human transmission occurs, virus will spread through close contact of a healthy person with an infected individual. Careless movement of one person may lead to a massive spread of infection. Each and every individual should cooperate with each other to protect their own community.
- Before or after infection spreads or seems to spread, the central and local governments will announce the present situations and countermeasures to be taken by each individual. To ensure that you will obtain all necessary information, you may collect information through TV, newspapers, magazines, other mass media and the Internet, while monitoring reliable information on your own district provided by local governments.

Examples of major public information sources are listed below.

Prefectural governments, health centers and municipalities

Prefectural governments, health centers and municipalities prepare posters, websites, telephone consultation and other services to communicate information and announcements to local residents in particular. Please check such sources as appropriate.

The Government of Japan

The Government of Japan may call to its people through the mass media or other channels, but usually it provides information through prefectural governments, health centers and municipalities. If you use the Internet, the following websites will be helpful.

Website of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Q&A etc.):
<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/>

Website of the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (specialized information):
<http://www.nih.go.jp/niid/index.html>

Website of the Infectious Disease Surveillance Center, National Institute of Infectious Diseases:
<http://idsc.nih.go.jp/index-j.html>

Website of quarantine stations: <http://www.forth.go.jp>

Website of overseas safety information, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:
<http://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp>

2. Preparations before pandemic influenza occurs

(1) Individuals and households

- 1) Countermeasures against pandemic influenza are an extended version of those against seasonal influenza.
 - Seasonal influenza virus is emitted from an infected person through coughs, sneezes, spits or other droplets, and infects others who inhale them directly or after drying and drifting in the air.
 - Therefore, it is extremely important to have persons manifesting high fevers, coughs, sneezes and other symptoms wear masks, as well as to wear masks yourself when you come in contact with such persons. It is also necessary to wash your hands after covering the mouth during coughs and sneezes, or after wiping the nose. These precautions are called “coughing manners” and are indispensable for preventing influenza. Also gargle and wash your hands every time you come home, while refraining from visiting areas where influenza outbreaks, crowded places or downtowns. It is similarly important to take a sufficient rest, enhance physical strength and resistance, eat a balanced diet and keep a regular lifestyle, to retain your health in an uninfected state.

“Coughing manners”

- * Cover the mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, turning the face away from others and keeping a distance of at least one meter.
- * Install covered trash boxes so that tissue paper containing respiratory secretion (such as nasal mucus and phlegm) can be disposed of immediately.
- * Urge coughing persons to wear masks.

It is desirable to use less penetrable masks such as surgical masks used at medical facilities, but common marketed masks are considered capable of preventing the spread of virus coughed out of infected persons to a certain degree.

It must be noted that, even if a healthy person wears a mask, he or she cannot completely prevent the inhalation of virus.

- * Masks shall be put on appropriately, as guided by the printed instruction.

- Receive vaccination against measles, seasonal influenza and other diseases manifesting high fevers as legally stipulated, to avoid superinfection with pandemic influenza.
 - No one knows when pandemic influenza will occur, and what will happen if it occurs. Grave damage is possible. Pay attention to future developments, recognizing that it is important to make whatever preparations you can at present.
- 2) Consult with your families on how you should respond to pandemic.
- If pandemic influenza starts to spread in certain areas or throughout Japan, it is planned to minimize its impact through public announcements urging 1) voluntary stay of infected individuals at home, 2) voluntary stay of families living in the same household with infected individuals at home, 3) temporary closure of schools, 4) postponement of gatherings etc., 5) refrainment from outings by local residents to minimize contact occasions, and so on.
 - Offices and organizations you belong to may also take measures to continue business or to control in-office infection, through shift of commuting hours, use of teleconferencing, effective shift rotation etc.
 - Pandemic does not only occur in Japan, but develops simultaneously in multiple countries. In the case of massive outbreak overseas, diverse commodities may run short and become unavailable due to diminished or suspended import.
 - Considering factors as above stated, each household is recommended to formulate a plan for varying cases, such that any of the household members gets infected and has to stay home, children's school announces closure for an extended period, working schedule is forcibly changed, etc. It is also recommended that workers consult with their employers on reporting procedures in the case of abrupt absence.
 - In the case of pandemic, essential daily activities may also be affected as above. Besides, it is the general rule to refrain from unnecessary outings to avoid infection. Therefore, it is recommended to stock food, commodities and other necessary supplies to cover a minimum time period (approximately two weeks), just as at the time of disaster. (See the attached example.)

(2) Municipalities

1) Identifying single-person households etc.

- Municipalities should collaborate with neighborhood associations and other local organizations to identify households at high risks of living difficulties in the case of infection by pandemic influenza, such as single-person households, aged households, or households of disabled citizens. Municipalities shall also list personal protective equipment (PPE) and materials required for visiting checks of pandemic influenza patients at home, while identifying and stockpiling a necessary amount of supplies.
- At the same time, municipal agencies in charge of public welfare shall collaborate with welfare centers etc. as well as with health and consultation centers in the area, to promote with the identification of such high-risk households.

2) Collecting and providing information

- Municipalities shall establish a system to collect information through sources including those listed in 1. (3) above, and provide collected information as necessary and accurately to local residents to avoid confusion, in collaboration with health centers (particularly prefectural centers).
- It is also important to disseminate correct understanding of infection (such that any one may get infected) through public relations and other channels, to prevent social discrimination and prejudice against infected individuals.

3) Preparations for delivering food etc.

- Once human-to-human transmission occurs, citizens may be recommended to refrain from outings to the minimum required to avoid contacts with infected individuals. In particular, residents in the neighborhood of an infected person may be requested to stay home. Food and other commodities may become highly unavailable due to drastic expansion of demand. In such cases, municipalities may be required to examine the delivery of necessary supplies to citizens.
- Population densities and other situations vary by locality, as to the amount of required supplies, delivery scheme, human resources and infection prevention measures for delivery, procedures for identifying the scope of delivery, etc. Therefore, each municipality shall formulate a plan based on its own actuality.

- Vulnerable citizens with a difficulty in stocking supplies may require collaborative measures by municipalities and welfare agencies.
- For example, a municipality may allocate supplies in a gym, community center or other large facility, to representatives of neighborhood associations and other local organizations, who should in turn deliver the allocated supplies to individual households directly. If the locality is underpopulated, staff of town office may deliver supplies to necessary households. Other possibilities may include the delivery of water by municipal water wagons, just like during water supply restriction at the time of disaster or water resource scarcity.

3. Response following the occurrence of human-to-human transmission (pandemic influenza)

(1) Individuals and households

1) Collecting information

- Information is classified as i) information provided by the central and local governments, ii) information provided by private enterprises (commercially or not), iii) information provided by the mass media, iv) (groundless) rumors, etc. Information providing sources may vary, such as public announcements, newspapers, magazines, TV and the Internet.
- It must be noted that some information does not have sufficient reliability or ground. In particular, rumors tend to include much false information. It is important to collect accurate information and take rational attitude, thereby avoiding panicking misguided by false information.
- Retention of medical, social security and utility services is critical to protect the life of the population. Interruption of such services will affect daily life and the economy of Japan seriously at once. Please understand that prepandemic vaccines (vaccination provided before pandemic influenza outbreaks) may be administered to health care workers and workers in social services etc. first, for the abovementioned reason.

2) If a household member manifests (suspected) symptoms of pandemic influenza

2-1) If only few residents have been infected in the area

- If a person is manifesting a high fever, coughs, generalized pains or other symptoms like those of seasonal influenza, and if that person is infected by pandemic influenza, he or she may cause “secondary infection” by visiting a nearby doctor without prior consultation, through contact with other patients in the waiting room etc. Persons returning from a country or region where infection occurs must pay extra attention to this point. If symptoms as abovementioned manifest, please call a health center, high-fever consultation center etc. and consult a medical institution with a high-fever outpatient department etc. designated by the prefectural government. Please check related information provided by the prefectural government, municipality and health center.

* High-fever consultation center:

A facility to answer inquiries from local residents manifesting high fevers, put up in a health center or other institutions by the prefectural government, special district or city operating health centers.

* High-fever outpatient department:

A department established with the aim of separating individuals manifesting high fevers from those with other symptoms; If infection by or manifestation of pandemic influenza is denied, the relevant individuals will be treated by the normal outpatient department. If infection by pandemic influenza is suspected or confirmed, the relevant individuals shall be

hospitalized in a designated medical institution for infectious diseases or otherwise treated as necessary.

- In particular, if you manifest cold-like symptoms such as a fever, coughs and sore throats, it cannot be told until you receive specified tests whether your symptoms are caused by a cold or influenza, and if by influenza whether it is pandemic or seasonal. This is why you must consult a designated medical institution, and adhere to “coughing manners” while you are in the buildings of a medical institution, when you go out, or even at home, to prevent potential spread of infection.
- If infection has not spread in the locality, families and friends contacting (suspected) patients may be requested to stay home. Preventive drugs may be distributed if necessary. Please pay good attention to notifications from health centers.

2-2) If an infection cluster occurs in the area suggesting an outbreak

- Depending on the type of actual pandemic influenza virus, patients in mild conditions may be requested to rest at home in the case of massive outbreak. Families of a patient shall prevent secondary infection in the household, by washing hands and gargling frequently as before, wearing masks and having the patient wear masks, adhering to “coughing manners” among other precautions. The patient should rest in a private room, separating him or her from other family members. Alcohol agents are effective for disinfection, and their use is recommended for general households as well.
- If you or your family member has been infected, you may be requested to stay home for a specified period to avoid infection to your neighbors, colleagues, friends and others. Please understand that pandemic influenza is capable of human-to-human transmission, and infection may spread throughout your local community, throwing the entire geographical area into chaos.

3) At all households

- Pandemic influenza and any other infectious diseases can occur to any individual. Prejudice and discrimination against (suspected) patients shall be strictly kept off.
- Schools may be closed for a specified period. If many children gather together in the area during school closure, this measure will become meaningless. Therefore, attention must be paid to prevent a number of children from gathering together.
- To control local infection, events attracting a large crowd shall be postponed as far as possible. Otherwise, measures shall be taken to avoid direct contacts between people.

- Consensus has not been built on whether healthy individuals could keep off infection by wearing masks during pandemic. However, it has been tested that confirmed patients would avoid infecting others by wearing masks. Therefore, it is recommended to prepare at least a mask you should wear when you are confirmed as a patient of pandemic influenza.
 - Cooperate with the neighborhood association, residents' association or other local organizations of your area. Local organizations may become the centers for delivering food and other supplies to residents. It is equally important to protect yourself and your local community.
- 4) Cooperation with the retention of medical services
- At the time of pandemic, demand will surge temporarily for medical services. Underlying infrastructure is expected to become extremely vulnerable, including physicians, other health care workers, and schemes for distributing pharmaceuticals and other medical supplies.
 - Even during pandemic, there will be emergency patients needing intensive care, as well as patients of other diseases requiring artificial dialysis and other continuous treatment.
 - Therefore, citizens are recommended to refrain from consulting medical institutions unnecessarily or calling ambulances for mild conditions, to cooperate in retaining normal medical services.
- 5) Refraining from unnecessary outings
- To minimize the spread of infection, it is requested to refrain from unnecessary outings, except for buying food and other essentials, checking the safety of single-person households, etc. (Because situations vary greatly by locality, specific rules shall be determined voluntarily in each area, under the leadership of the governing municipality.)

(2) Municipalities

1) Providing information

- Municipalities shall provide their residents with essential information to avoid confusion, in collaboration with prefectural governments. It is also important to monitor to prevent groundless or false rumors or information that may lead to discrimination from spreading. (Municipalities shall confirm the reliability of each piece of information, in concerted efforts with the national and prefectural governments.)

2) Delivery of food etc.

- Administrative agencies may be required to deliver food etc. to residents who cannot go out or have other restrictions.
- If delivery is considered necessary, administrative agencies shall deliver essential supplies smoothly based on pre-formulated plans, in collaboration with neighborhood associations, residents' associations and other local organizations.

3) Providing consultation services

- Health centers are primarily responsible for answering specific inquiries from residents. However, health centers may become too preoccupied with transfer of (suspected) patients, hospitalization measures, active epidemiological research and other scientific operations, to respond sufficiently to residents' questions.
- To avoid confusion and resolve residents' concerns, municipalities are recommended to provide extended consultation services at institutions other than health centers. For example, it may be an option to put up special consultation centers or telephone service centers at municipal public welfare centers, answering inquiries not only on diseases but also on living problems, municipal actions, and any other concerns or questions as far as possible.

Examples of supplies to be stocked by individuals

- Examples of nonperishable food
 - Staple food
 - Rice
 - Dried noodles (soba, somen, udon etc.)
 - Cut rice cake (mochi)
 - Cornflakes and cereals
 - Dried bread

 - Seasonings
 - Others
 - Vacuum-packed or freeze-dried food
 - Frozen food (Pay attention to the preserving temperatures at home and power failures)
 - Ready-to-eat noodles
 - Canned food
 - Snacks
 - Mineral water
 - Beverages in cans or PET bottles
- Commodities and pharmaceuticals
 - First-aid supplies
 - Drugs (stomachics, painkillers, prescription drugs for chronic illnesses)
 - Adhesive plasters (large and small)
 - Gauze and cottons (sterilized and unsterilized)
 - Antipyretics (acetaminophen etc.) * Note that some antipyretics may contribute to influenza-associated encephalopathy. Please consult physicians or pharmacists before purchase.
 - Counter-influenza goods
 - Masks
 - Rubber gloves (tough ones)
 - Water pillows and ice bags (to cool the head or the axillaries)
 - Bleaches (hypochlorous acid, having disinfectant effects)
 - Disinfectant alcohol agents

- Normal disaster goods (for convenience)

Flashlights

Batteries

Cell phone chargers

Radios and compact TVs

Cassette ovens and gas cassettes

Toilet paper

Tissue paper

Kitchen wrap

Aluminum foil

Detergents (for laundry, dishes etc.), soap

Shampoos and rinses

Wet tissues (with and without alcohol ingredients)

Sanitary goods (for women)

Plastic bags (to seal in contaminated garbage)