**What about medicines and vaccines?**
- There are specific medicines, such as oseltamivir, but these are only recommended for those at high risk of complications.
- A pandemic flu vaccine is being developed but will only become available towards the end of 2009, and supplies will be limited.

**Schools and work places**
- Coughing and hand washing messages should be vigorously promoted. School children and employees should take the messages home to families and friends.
- Closing of places or work or schools to increase social distancing is controversial. For it to be effective it needs to be implemented four weeks or more and even then a second wave of flu might wipe out the protection gained.^[Cauchemez S, et al. Estimating the impact of school closure on influenza transmission from sentinel data. Nature Vol 452, 10 April 2008]

---

**Basic prevention measures**

1. **Catch your cough / sneeze**
   - into a tissue and dispose of tissue in dustbin immediately (best way!)
   - into the inside of your elbow
   - If you use your hands be sure to wash them
   - Into the blanket or cover you are lying under

2. **Wash your hands after coughing / sneezing**
   - thoroughly with soap & water after coughing or sneezing, if up and about.

---

**If in bed:** if available use tissues, which can be collected in a container and put straight into the rubbish bin.
- If alcohol hand rub is available, place it by the bed and rub on after coughing or after making contact with the patient.

**3. Stay at home** if you have flu-like illness until you feel better and have stopped coughing.

**Home care for the sick**
- If possible, people with flu should nurses in separate room.
- If possible—do not share a bed with children
- If the above is not feasible, coughing patients should sleep with their heads nearer, than the heads of others in the room.
- Do not sit on the patient’s bed.

**Carers should:**
- When not helping the patient directly, but talking or listening, keep an arm’s length from patient.
- Wash their hands or use alcohol hand rub each time after touching the patient or clothes or bedding.
- Wear a mask if available.
- Use a plastic apron—when available. After use, wipe down with alcohol, carefully remove the apron and hang it up with the outer surface facing the wall or door.

---

**More Information / Enquiries:**
Visit the following website
http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/your_gov/305

---

*Compiled by: Communicable Disease Control, 021-483 3737 / 3156*
Serious symptoms in adults needing urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion and dizziness
- Dehydration, as a result of vomiting or diarrhoea or weakness and inability to drink enough fluids.

Should I be worried?
Flu whether seasonal or pandemic is very infectious and difficult to avoid. You can only reduce the risk by:

- Catching your cough or sneeze, and encourage others to do the same.
- Cover your mouth and nose with your hand if someone else is coughing near you (<2m)
- Wash your hands or use alcohol rub after coughing, and before and after touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Encouraging those who are ill with flu symptoms to stay home until better.
- Employers and employees should discuss...