



**American
Red Cross**

Cape Cod and Islands Chapter

286 South Street
Hyannis, Massachusetts 02601
Tel. (508) 775-1540
Fax (508) 771-2209
info@cciredcross.org
capecodandislandsredcross.org

Media Alert
MEDIA ALERT

Contact: Glen Beasley
Phone: (508) 775-1540 x16
ccexdir@cape.com

American Red Cross Provides Pandemic Flu Preparedness Information to the Public

April 29, 2009, Hyannis, MA - As the World Health Organization has raised the pandemic influenza alert level to 5 on its six-point scale, showing the increasing concern about the swine flu (H1N1) outbreak and indicating that a pandemic may be imminent, the American Red Cross has posted a pandemic flu video on RedCross.org. Other pandemic preparedness materials will also be added to the site. In addition, a special flu information sheet is available on-line at capecodandislandsredcross.org

The American Red Cross is monitoring the developing situation with this swine flu (H1N1 flu) outbreak and is in close contact with federal and state officials, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Homeland Security.

This is a serious situation that has the potential to spread, and it is a good time for families, businesses and organizations to follow good public health practices and to review and update their preparedness plans.

- Stocking extra food, water and supplies at home will reduce the need to go out should this swine flu strain become more widespread and schools or businesses temporarily close.
- The Red Cross recommends storing a two-week supply of food, water and household necessities such as laundry detergent and toilet paper. A gallon of water per person per day should be stored in clean plastic containers. Family preparation steps should also include storing formula for infants, food for special nutritional needs, essential medicines and medical items, and extra food for pets.
- Common sense basic public health practices should be followed. These include covering your cough/sneeze with a tissue, frequent hand-washing, visiting a doctor for flu-like symptoms and staying home when sick.

While Red Cross organizations in Mexico and other nations provide basic medical care to the public as part of their ongoing mission, the American Red Cross and its chapters have different responsibilities, and focus more on providing shelter, food and mental health counseling.

The American Red Cross and its chapters will continue to work with government officials on the swine flu issue and stand ready to help as appropriate. The American Red Cross is committed to maintaining the blood supply for the public, to educating the public on preparedness and safety, and to ensuring that we can continue to provide disaster services to those in need.

People seeking information on human swine flu should visit the CDC web site or call 1-800-CDC-INFO. For flu preparedness information, visit capecodandislandsredcross.org or Redcross.org or call (508) 775-1540.

For more information or to support the American Red Cross Cape Cod Islands Chapter, write to 286 South Street, Hyannis, MA 02601, call (508) 775-1540 or visit capecodandislandsredcross.org ###