

Title:

Bird Flu-Worst-Case Scenario

Word Count:

798

Summary:

There has been a lot of buzz about bird flu or the avian influenza and how it could become a global pandemic. What would a pandemic really mean? The federal government just launched a 7 billion dollar program to help the prevention and out break of a bird flu pandemic. There have only been 83 deaths from avian flu worldwide since 2003. Health experts have not yet seen evidence of human to human transmission. So what does it mean? And why is everyone so worried about a pandemic?

Keywords:

bird flu, H5N1, bird flu articles, avian influenza, avian, pandemic, flu, birdflu, avian flu

Article Body:

There has been a lot of buzz about bird flu or the avian influenza and how it could become a global pandemic. What would a pandemic really mean? The federal government just launched a 7 billion dollar program to help the prevention and out break of a bird flu pandemic. There have only been 83 deaths from avian flu worldwide since 2003. Health experts have not yet seen evidence of human to human transmission. So what does it mean? And why is everyone so worried about a pandemic?

This new strain of flu virus would be more resistant than other normal flu strains and if it turns into a form that passes easily from person to person, we would have little immunity to it. Millions could become ill and millions would die. Once it starts to spread it could move rapidly around the world infecting millions and affecting the lives of everyone. The World Bank, which has estimated that a bird flu pandemic lasting a year could, cost the global economy up to \$800 billion. The economic toll on the world economy will be catastrophic. What is the worst-case scenario and how might it develop?

Here is how a bird flu pandemic might unfold:

Outbreaks of avian flu in birds continue in several additional countries outside of Southeast Asia including Russia, Africa and the Middle East<br>

Human cases of bird flu increase<br>  
Health experts confirm first human-to-human transmissions<br>  
Flu screening is stepped up at airports around the world for passengers coming from infected countries<br>  
Health care workers show signs of increased exposure<br>  
Air travel spreads virus to all corners of the globe within 3 months<br>  
First confirmed human transmission cases appear in Europe Russia, and the United States<br>  
Outbreaks continue, becoming more widespread reaching epidemic status<br>  
Regional stockpiles of antivirals quickly dwindle, new high volume production and distribution is 6 months off<br>  
International flights are reduced or eliminated to help contain spread of the flu<br>  
Billions are lost on international commerce, affecting millions of jobs around the world<br>  
US imports from Asian factories halted as Asian workers fall ill, US inventories drop<br>  
International trade devastated <br>  
US economy feels effects of loss of productivity due to millions of workers out sick<br>  
Financial markets hit by panic selling, gold prices soar<br>  
Run on banks as investors convert to cash<br>  
Hospitals see surge in flu patients overwhelming staff and supplies, only those most likely to live given access to limited available ventilators <br>  
Healthcare workers and first responders out sick or stay home to care for ill family members<br>  
Public events are canceled and schools are closed<br>  
Government offices closed, non essential services shut down<br>  
Social services reduced or eliminated. Services still functioning are overwhelmed<br>  
Public transportation halted<br>  
Air traffic halted due to air traffic controllers, airport staff and flight crews out sick<br>  
Interstate commerce greatly reduced with truck drivers, warehouse and rail workers out sick<br>  
Food deliveries, gas deliveries, other essential supplies all reduced or eliminated<br>  
Grocery stores close due to shipments being eliminated <br>  
Food distribution chain from farm to stores breaks down<br>  
Travel restricted, quarantines mandatory, enforced by National Guard<br>  
Widespread looting and riots over food shortages and access to healthcare<br>  
Local, State police and National Guard overwhelmed<br>  
Social structure breaks down<br>

Domestic violence increases as people are forced to stay home<br>  
Loss of workers affects all businesses across the economy, including finance, sanitation, utilities, internet, distribution, energy, retail, tourism and travel<br>  
Utility outages increase as coal shipments are reduced and minimum required staffs at power plants and water plants are out sick<br>  
Funeral homes are overwhelmed as bodies stack up<br>  
2nd wave of pandemic bird flu hits<br>  
Global economy will take years to recover from catastrophic losses and loss of trained employees who died

Does the above scare you? Think it won't happen? Well this is the exact scenario your local, state and federal governments are training and planning for. How would you survive? It has always been recommended to keep 3 days of supplies on hand to survive a natural disaster. We have seen how the federal government handles natural disasters. The above scenario isn't for 3 days or 3 weeks. It might last up to 3 years.

How would you survive being housebound for several months? What if you couldn't go to work or to the grocery store? What if you had loved ones that were sick? You need to stay informed about a possible bird flu pandemic and learn how to provide for yourself and your family. It may not happen in the near future but health experts agree it will happen. It is just a matter of time.