

GET READY

Emerging Infectious Diseases

What Are They?

Emerging infectious diseases include diseases that have surfaced for the first time in recent years and those we thought we had conquered, but have returned with new complications. Emerging infectious diseases also include diseases that can be used as weapons for bioterrorism purposes.

Emerging infectious diseases vary greatly in their ability to cause serious illness and death. Some also spread more easily from person to person than others.

And we've seen several pop up in the last few years, ranging from mumps to West Nile virus to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

But, you can take steps to protect yourself, your family and your community from these diseases every day.

In the Spotlight: Mumps



The Comeback: Starting in Iowa in December 2005, outbreaks of mumps—spread very much like the cold—have surfaced in many states.

Symptoms: First symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches and loss of appetite. Then, glands become swollen. The most common swelling with mumps are the glands that are in your cheek, near your jaw line and below your ears (See picture).

Treatment: There is no specific treatment for mumps. However, its symptoms can be treated. Consult a health care professional if you experience complications.

How to protect yourself: Make sure that you've received the mumps vaccine, part of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine, in your lifetime.



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In the Spotlight: West Nile Virus

Discovery in U.S.: In 1999, West Nile virus—spread primarily by infected mosquitoes—was detected in the United States.

Treatment: Although there is no standard treatment for West Nile virus, those with severe symptoms—ranging from neck stiffness to disorientation to vision loss—should seek care in the hospital.



How To Protect Yourself:

- Put on bug spray before you go outside.
- If possible, wear pants and long-sleeved shirts to help protect your skin.
- Empty excess water from flower pots and other containers that are outside.
- Make sure there are no holes in your window and door screens.

Symptoms: Most people (about 4 in 5) infected with West Nile virus show no signs or symptoms. Of those who do show symptoms, the most common include:

- Headache
- Fever
- Body Aches
- Feeling sick to your stomach
- Throwing up
- Rash on stomach, chest and back
- Swollen glands

In the Spotlight: H5N1 Avian Influenza



What Is It?

Avian flu is a type of flu that birds get, which is why it's also called "bird flu." While some birds are only carriers, this flu can cause wild birds, chickens and other domestic birds to

become sick and die. There have also been a small number of cases in which people have been infected with the virus through direct contact with birds.

H5N1 is the scientific term for the bird flu virus that is currently infecting wild birds, poultry, other animals and humans around the world, primarily in Asia.

Symptoms: The people that have become sick so far from H5N1 avian flu, mostly in Asia, have started with similar symptoms to the flu that we see every year, but generally more severe. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Muscle aches
- Eye infections
- Severe respiratory diseases

Treatment: Two types of antiviral medications—oseltamivir and zanamivir—may work to treat H5N1 bird flu. However, additional studies need to be carried out to demonstrate if and how well they work.

How To Protect Yourself:

- A vaccine for H5N1 bird flu is being developed, but has not yet been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- Do not touch sick or dead birds unless you have to. If you have to touch them, use strong, waterproof gloves and wash your hands and arms afterwards.
- Avoid close contact with individuals who have H5N1 bird flu.
- Cook all poultry thoroughly. Chicken, for example, should be at a temperature of at least 165 °F throughout.
- Do not consume raw eggs or food with raw egg ingredients, such as cookie dough or cake batter. Be sure to thoroughly cook all dishes with raw eggs before eating them.



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