Seasonal Flu vs. Pandemic Flu

Know the Difference

Seasonal Flu

- Outbreaks occur each year, mostly in the winter.
- The viruses that cause seasonal flu are like the ones from the past few years. That's why many people can fight off the illness.
- Not all people who get sick will need to go to the hospital, so there is space for those who are really sick.
- Healthy adults usually don't get very sick. The very young, the elderly, and people with chronic health problems could get extremely ill.
- A flu vaccine (flu shot or nasal spray) is made each year that works well to stop the spread of seasonal flu.
- It takes about 2 days to get sick after contact with the seasonal flu virus. A person can start to spread seasonal flu to others about 1 day before they feel sick, and up to 5 days after becoming sick.
- Getting a flu shot or the nasal spray each year is the best way to protect yourself from seasonal flu.

How you can slow the spread of germs

Stay home when sick  Cover your coughs and sneezes  Clean your hands

- Does not happen often.
- Because the virus is new, many more people are likely to get sick after being exposed.
- So many people will get sick that hospitals and health care providers may not be able to handle all the people who need care.
- People of any age and even healthy people could get very ill.
- A vaccine for pandemic flu may not be available when pandemic flu first breaks out. It may take 4 to 6 months to make the first doses of pandemic-specific vaccine.
- No one knows for sure how fast pandemic flu will make a person sick or spread to others.

www.publichealth.va.gov/InfectionDontPassItOn

Infection:
Don't Pass It On