

Pandemic 1

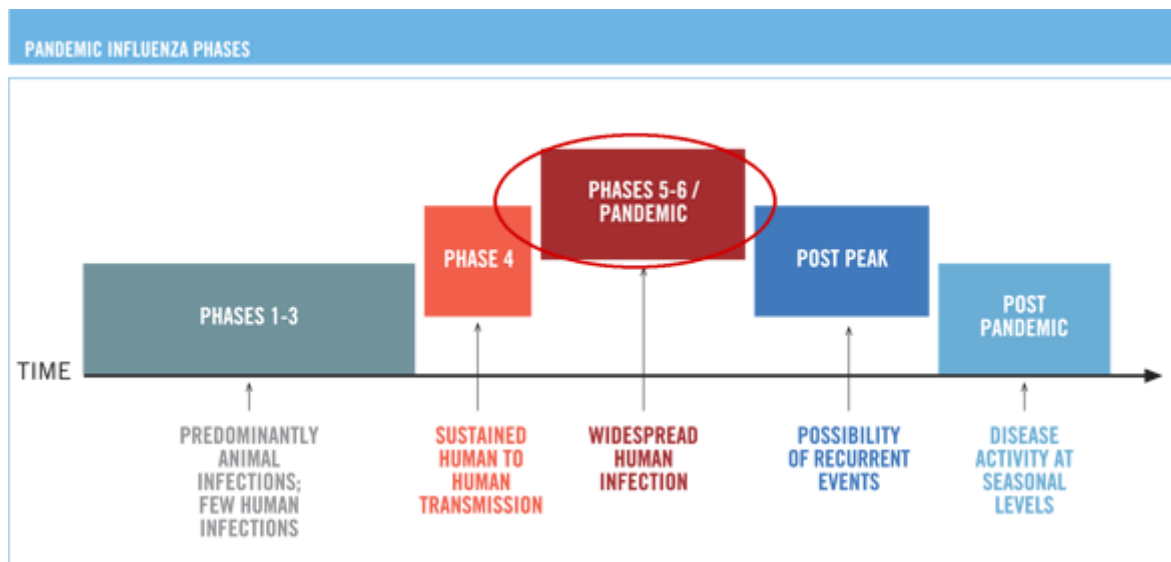
Teen - Reading Comprehension H1N1 A Flu

Level Intermediate & Up

A Pandemic Is Declared

On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) signaled that a global pandemic of novel influenza A (H1N1) was underway by raising the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6. This action was a reflection of the spread of the new H1N1 virus, not the severity of illness caused by the virus. At the time, more than 70 countries had reported cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) infection and there were ongoing community level outbreaks of novel H1N1 in multiple parts of the world.

Since the WHO declaration of a pandemic, the new H1N1 virus has continued to spread, with the number of countries reporting cases of novel H1N1 nearly doubling. The Southern Hemisphere's regular influenza season has begun and countries there are reporting that the new H1N1 virus is spreading and causing illness along with regular seasonal influenza viruses. In the United States, significant novel H1N1 illness has continued into the summer, with localized and in some cases intense outbreaks occurring. The United States continues to report the largest number of novel H1N1 cases of any country worldwide, however, most people who have become ill have recovered without requiring medical treatment.



In nature, influenza viruses circulate continuously among animals, especially birds. Even though such viruses might theoretically develop into pandemic viruses, in **Phase 1** no viruses circulating among animals have been reported to cause infections in humans.

In **Phase 2** an animal influenza virus circulating among domesticated or wild animals is known to have caused infection in humans, and is therefore considered a potential pandemic threat.

In **Phase 3**, an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks. Limited human-to-human transmission may occur under some circumstances,

for example, when there is close contact between an infected person and an unprotected caregiver. However, limited transmission under such restricted circumstances does not indicate that the virus has gained the level of transmissibility among humans necessary to cause a pandemic.

Phase 4 is characterized by verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza reassortant virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks." The ability to cause sustained disease outbreaks in a community marks a significant upwards shift in the risk for a pandemic. Any country that suspects or has verified such an event should urgently consult with WHO so that the situation can be jointly assessed and a decision made by the affected country if implementation of a rapid pandemic containment operation is warranted. Phase 4 indicates a significant increase in risk of a pandemic but does not necessarily mean that a pandemic is a forgone conclusion.

Phase 5 is characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region. While most countries will not be affected at this stage, the declaration of Phase 5 is a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of the planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6, the pandemic phase, is characterized by community level outbreaks in at least one other country in a different WHO region in addition to the criteria defined in **Phase 5**. Designation of this phase will indicate that a global pandemic is under way.

During the **post-peak period**, pandemic disease levels in most countries with adequate surveillance will have dropped below peak observed levels. The post-peak period signifies that pandemic activity appears to be decreasing; however, it is uncertain if additional waves will occur and countries will need to be prepared for a second wave.

Previous pandemics have been characterized by waves of activity spread over months. Once the level of disease activity drops, a critical communications task will be to balance this information with the possibility of another wave. Pandemic waves can be separated by months and an immediate "at-ease" signal may be premature.

In the **post-pandemic period**, influenza disease activity will have returned to levels normally seen for seasonal influenza. It is expected that the pandemic virus will behave as a seasonal influenza A virus. At this stage, it is important to maintain surveillance and update pandemic preparedness and response plans accordingly. An intensive phase of recovery and evaluation may be required.

A.- Answer the Questions

- 1.- What does WHO mean?
- 2.- What causes the H1N1 illness?
- 3.- When was the pandemic alert raised to level 6?
- 4.- How many countries had reported cases at the time?
- 5.-What other illness is reported along with H1N1 in the Southern hemisphere?
- 6.- Has the illness continued into the Summer in USA?
- 7.- What country reports the largest number of cases worldwide?
- 8.- According to the passage, has everybody who became ill recovered with the help of medical treatment?

B.- True or False

- 1.- There are 10 Pandemic Flu Phases
- 2.- Viruses circulating among animals, in Phase 1, haven't been reported to infect humans
- 3.- In Phase 2 the virus, previously circulating among animals, infects humans
- 4.- There is a lot of human-to-human transmission in Phase 3
- 5.- Phase 4 is characterized by the ability to cause sustained disease outbreaks in a community
- 6.- Any country that suspects or has verified such an event should urgently consult with WHO
- 7.- There is no danger of a pandemic in Phase 4
- 8.- **Phase 5** is characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region
- 9.- But it is not a strong signal that a pandemic is imminent
- 10.- Designation of Phase 6 indicates a global pandemic is under way

C.- Match the two halves

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| 1.- The post peak period | a.- will occur |
| 2.- Additional waves | b.- separated by months |
| 3.- Pandemics are characterized | c.- to maintain surveillance and update pandemic preparedness and response plans accordingly. |
| 4.- Pandemic waves can be | d.- signifies that pandemic activity seems to be decreasing. |
| 5.- In the Post-pandemic period it is Important | e.- by waves of activity spread over months |

ONLY FOR TEACHERS ANSWERS

- B 1.- f 2.- t 3.- t 4.- f 5.- t 6.- t 7.- f 8.- t 9.- f 10.- t
- C 1 D 2 A 3 E 4 B 5 C