



## Dire Swine Flu Warnings from White House

The President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology issued a dire warning Monday about the spread of the swine flu virus later this year, titled "On US Preparations for 2009-H1N1 Influenza." It claimed that a "plausible scenario" would be "infection of 30-50 percent of the U.S. population this fall and winter, with symptoms in approximately 20-40 percent of the population (60-120 million people), more than half of whom would seek medical attention."

While acknowledging that the true impact is impossible to predict, the report said the H1N1 virus could result in up to 1.8 million hospital admissions with as many as 300,000 requiring hospitalization in intensive care units. This would place "enormous stress" on intensive care units, with between 50 to 100 percent of beds occupied.

On an even more ominous note, the report warned of the possibility of between 30,000 and 90,000 deaths attributable to the virus — mostly among children and young adults. But to put that in perspective, the regular seasonal flu is usually responsible for between 30,000 to 40,000 deaths per year.

"It's a plausible scenario that we need to be prepared for," said Marty Cetron, the Center for Disease Control's director of the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine. But CDC director Thomas Frieden told the *Los Angeles Times* that flu outbreaks are very unpredictable and "cautioned" that the effects this winter could be "much milder."

The government report, available on the [White House Web site](#), stressed that it was not a prediction, but rather a tool for planning the government response. "The scenario illustrates that an H1N1 resurgence could cause serious disruption of social and medical capacities in our country in the coming months." It also noted that "By way of comparison, it is less severe by a factor of three (in terms of expected deaths per capita) than the 'reasonable worst case' planning assumptions, publicized by the UK government, for the H1N1 resurgence in that country."

Health and human services secretary Kathleen Sebelius took the opportunity to promote the vaccine for the seasonal flu and the swine flu, saying the H1N1 vaccine must be considered the nation's defense against the virus. "I think it's important that people begin to anticipate that we will have a vaccine," she explained on NBC's Today show. The first doses are expected to be ready by mid-October. "We think it's likely that we're going to need two shots for the vaccine." She also noted that the focus should be on pregnant women, healthcare workers, and people with medical conditions, also noting that "We want the population that is most at risk to begin their seasonal flu vaccine now."

The report also issued a number of recommendations including increased CDC "surveillance systems" to detect new variants of the virus, accelerated vaccine production and putting one senior White House official in charge of coordinating "all decision making about the pandemic."



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on August 25, 2009

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Whether or not cases of swine flu spread in the coming months, should the federal government really be behaving as Americans' nannies and doctors? Presumably this is all justified in politicians' minds by the infamous "general welfare" clause of the Constitution, but a cursory review of the Federalist Papers would quickly reveal that this is not what the Founding Fathers had in mind. The co-chair of Obama's advisory council that issued the report, John Holdren, actually co-authored a book titled *Ecoscience* calling for forced abortions, mass sterilization, and a "planetary regime" with the power to enforce the sick notions. Is this who Americans really want in charge of these policies?

It is past time for the government to stop acting as a savior and for it to start obeying the Constitution. People need to take personal responsibility. And the media should fulfill its role in informing the people, who can then decide with their healthcare providers and their families what the most appropriate course of action would be. People like Barack Obama and John Holdren have no business dictating national healthcare policies.

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