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Dr. David G. Williams

Swine Flu, Round Two

Over the years, I'm afraid I've become like a broken record, saying that I hate to make predictions. One reason for my reluctance is that I feel my primary objective is to provide you with effective solutions to current problems rather than dwelling on potential future problems.

And, from a personal standpoint, there's no satisfaction in predicting circumstances that may eventually result in a great deal of suffering, or even death, for many people.

I always hope I'm wrong when I make predictions like these. But, from my vantage point as a doctor, researcher, medical historian, and, essentially, a modern-day survivalist, some future events appear as certain to me as the sun rising in the morning. This has been the case with a global pandemic (an epidemic of infectious disease that rapidly spreads around the world)—the exact situation we may be facing today. For years I've been warning of a global pandemic, and I always said it wasn't a question of "if" it would happen, but "when."

In just the last few weeks a version of swine flu, which appears to have originated in Mexico, has been rapidly spreading around the world. There's a little lag time from when I actually write this newsletter until you receive it, but, at the present time, this outbreak is currently in the early stages. It has the potential to spread like a wildfire out of control, but we shall see.

Those of you who receive my regular Health Dispatches will recognize the headline of this month's article; it's the same headline as was used on my April 28th e-letter about the swine flu. In that communication, I helped you deal with all the media hype. In *Alternatives* this month, I'll provide you with guidance for dealing with the flu itself that goes beyond the e-mail. [Editor's note: To receive consistent early and timely advice from Dr. Williams, sign up for the *Alternatives Health Dispatches* at www.drdauidwilliams.com.]

The World Health Organization (WHO) has increased its alert level from 3 to 5 at this time. The alert level has never been at 5 before, and I wouldn't be surprised if, by the time you receive this issue, it's been raised to 6, the highest level. WHO criteria for Level 5 indicate that "a pandemic is imminent" and "the time to finalize...planned measures is short." Declaration of Level 6 means that WHO believes the pandemic has arrived.

Only time will tell if this is the "big one" or not. In the pandemic of 1918 there was a four-month gap between the time the first mild cases began to surface and the big wave of serious infections started. I hope the current flu can be contained, or will naturally fade away on its own, but, unfortunately, even if this does happen, there will be other widespread infections of some sort, at some time, to follow. If you haven't made at least the basic preparations to protect and provide for yourself and your family, I urge you to start doing so now.

I firmly believe that everyone needs to take certain precautions and have at least some basic supplies on hand at all times. Regardless of whether the crisis is related to disease, the economy, the weather, or a national emergency, keeping certain health- and food-related items on hand is more than just prudent. Being able to maintain and/or restore your health and that of your loved ones is one of the most essential things you can do.

With the current swine flu threat, here are some recommendations. Pass these along to the ones you love.



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You will observe with concern how long a useful truth may be known, and exist, before it is generally received and practiced on. — Benjamin Franklin

Stay Calm

First of all...don't panic. There are natural solutions that work against the flu—any flu. (I'll go into those later in this newsletter.) Being prepared and aware of what's going on puts you way ahead of the crowd, and very significantly decreases the chances that you'll get infected. If you do become infected, these same solutions increase your ability to quickly overcome the flu.

At the beginning of the outbreak, the flu virus was called the swine flu virus. The preferred name now has become the H1N1 virus. By avoiding any reference to swine, it is hoped the pork industry won't suffer as much. (You can't, by the way, contract the disease from consuming pork products. Cooking destroys the virus.) [Editor's note: For a summary of flu terminology, visit the *Subscriber Center of the Alternatives Web site*, www.drdauidwilliams.com.]

Regardless of the name, the flu is transmitted either by aerosol (dispersed in the air—commonly through sneezing, coughing, or similar means) or through direct contact with a contaminated surface.

No one can say if this will become a full-blown pandemic at this point. And even if it does, the cases reported outside of Mexico seem to be of a milder form of flu. And even the very large majority of those who contracted the flu in Mexico are now disease free. In no way do I want to downplay the seriousness of those who have died from the disease, but, in the grand scheme of things, the actual death rate is low.

Keep the current situation in perspective. More than 15,000 people die each year in this country from falls, and the Centers for Disease Control claims that around 36,000 people die in this country every year from the ordinary flu. Many people will undoubtedly lie in fear at night after every newspaper and television news reports on every known fatality from this form of flu, when the odds of them dying will be infinitesimal.

(The WHO reports that epidemics of flu result in three to five million cases of infection each year and

somewhere between 250,000 and 500,000 deaths. Even though this happens on a yearly basis, it doesn't trigger the fear like we're now seeing, since most of the deaths occur in third-world countries and not industrialized countries like our own.)

Resist Temptation

I don't recommend vaccines. Even the CDC says this year's current flu vaccine wasn't formulated for this strain of swine flu. (The strains included in a current year's vaccine are chosen based on the strains that appeared the previous year in the Far East.) The current strain is a combination of several different strains, including those of human, swine, and avian flus, and is unlike any that has been seen before.

Research has repeatedly shown that when it comes to flu, vaccines don't work. If this situation worsens (or at least is perceived as worsening), there will be efforts to force the vaccinations on the public. Not only do the vaccines not work, in many cases they cause far more harm than good.

I'd imagine that the powers that be encouraged the change in terminology because they don't want to remind anyone of the swine flu fiasco that occurred in 1976. If you'll remember, that time around only a handful of people got sick from the swine flu, but the outbreak triggered a massive vaccination program. The vaccinations actually caused more damage than the flu; nearly 500 recipients developed a degenerative nerve disorder known as Guillain-Barré syndrome.

On the other hand, I can understand why some companies would be hesitant to even develop and produce a vaccine of this nature. This particular strain may fizzle out like others have in the past. If this happens, they could be stuck with millions of doses of a specific vaccine that's worthless.

In this particular case, it will be months before a targeted vaccine can be developed, and there probably won't even be time to test its effectiveness—or safety. And honestly, there's not much incentive to do much



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Dr. Williams works closely with Mountain Home Nutritionals, a division of Doctors' Preferred, LLC and subsidiary of Healthy Directions, LLC, developing his unique formulations that supply many of the hard-to-find nutrients he recommends. Dr. Williams is compensated by Doctors' Preferred, LLC on the sales of these nutritional supplements and health products, which allows him to continue devoting his life to worldwide research and the development of innovative, effective health solutions.

safety testing. Now that the pharmaceutical companies have complete immunity from any lawsuits resulting from vaccine-related death or side effects, you can expect them to concentrate on expediency, sales, and profits. Safety will once again take a back seat.

Resist Further Temptation

The antiviral medications Tamiflu and Relenza are currently the drugs of choice to treat the flu. This last flu season, however, the ordinary H1N1-type flu virus developed an almost total resistance to Tamiflu—and it's possible that could happen again as soon as the current flu begins trading genes with the human virus.

I recommend that you give serious consideration before using any of these antiviral medications. I personally wouldn't use them. Neither prevent the flu, but, at best, can only help reduce the symptoms and their duration (research suggests they lessen the duration by only 1 to 1½ days). To have any effect, they have to be taken early enough, generally within the first day or two after symptoms appear. And both have serious potential side effects, particularly in children. Japan banned the use of Tamiflu in children a couple of years ago after the drug was linked to an increase in deaths, brain infections, and serious neurological problems. Even worse, its use makes you more susceptible to secondary bacterial infections of the “super bug” variety. And the secondary bacterial infections are what caused the high rates of death in past flu pandemics, particularly from the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Use Some Common Sense

Follow the commonsense procedures that keep your body and immune system in top condition, regardless of what the threat might be. They work.

- Get plenty of rest and sleep.
- Wash your hands frequently with regular soap. (Avoid antibacterial soaps whenever possible, particularly in your home; they result in your own personal breeding ground for “super bugs.”) When it comes to disinfecting ability, cost, and availability, it's hard to beat plain chlorine bleach and hydrogen peroxide, which I've written about extensively in the past.

I've also written before about ozone as a highly effective disinfectant. Ordinarily, ozone breaks down quickly to regular oxygen, but the Lotus Sanitizing System generates ozonated water from ordinary tap water for only pennies a quart. Admittedly, the unit's initial cost of \$149 to \$169 would buy a lot of bleach or hydrogen peroxide, but the convenience of having

the solution available whenever you need it will make the cost worthwhile for many people. The unit is available from Mountain Home Solutions, at 800-718-8293, or directly from the manufacturer, at www.tersano.com or 800-808-1724.

- If there is a flu outbreak in your immediate area, isolation is one of the easiest precautions to follow if you've been prudent enough to have a few weeks' supply of food on hand. Keeping a box of either Type N95 or N100 facial masks will provide a greater degree of safety in the event you have to venture out, whether the danger is from the swine flu or any other airborne pathogen in the future. The N100 types provide more filtration than the N95 models, but are considerably more expensive. N95 models have been routinely recommended by the WHO and the CDC. The 3M company makes an excellent N95 mask, model 8612F. A company called Moldex makes several inexpensive and effective N95 masks that range in price from less than a dollar to just over \$3 apiece. The fancier ones have padded nose pieces and exhaust valves which makes them slightly more comfortable.

Most masks are too large for children, but the 3M model #8110S seems to fit most toddlers.

The effectiveness of masks largely depends on their ability to seal around the face. If they don't fit and you're breathing unfiltered air, they aren't doing you much good. If you fit them properly and keep them that way, disposables are fine.

Disposable masks aren't perfect, but they do help stop larger droplets from sneezes and coughs from landing around the nose and mouth. The coverage also keeps you from touching those areas and becoming infected. Generally, someone is infectious beginning one day before any symptoms arise and then for an additional seven days—or even longer if there are still flu symptoms. Children seem to remain infectious longer than adults.

A better option is the use of what's called a reusable elastomeric mask. These are typically silicone masks that fit much better and have replaceable filters. In this category I particularly like the North 7700. This model sells for around \$20, and the replacement filters go for about \$4 a pair. For continuous use these are much better.

Several online suppliers sell these items, but supplies can go quickly. One of the best suppliers that had most of these items available, at excellent prices, when I last checked, is www.library-dust.com at

800-343-2066. (They do have a minimum order of \$65. Combine your order with that of a friend or other family member if you need to.)

- Keep in mind that large gatherings of people always increase the risk of contracting flu and other communicable diseases. Families with children in school always have a greater number of colds, flu, intestinal outbreaks, et cetera.

Basic Nutritional Recommendations

Regardless of the health threat, we know that our ability to remain well and overcome the threat is dependent on our immune system. And we are discovering every day that the beneficial bacteria population in our lower bowel is one of the most important components of the immune system. I can't overstress the need for constantly nurturing these bacteria with diet and supplements. Avoiding the unnecessary use of antibiotics while supplementing the diet with fermented foods—such as live yogurt and sauerkraut—and a good daily probiotic supplement has become essential in today's world.

I've been preaching about the benefits of **fermented foods** for decades. You can make your own yogurt or kefir for barely more than the cost of the milk, and sauerkraut for pennies a pint with just cabbage, salt, and water. As my dad always says, "It's cheap insurance."

Another form of cheap insurance (pennies a day) is the animal feed additive called **XPC**. I've written about it also in the past. If you've haven't included that in your supplement routine, you're missing out on one of the best bargains available. Just 3/4 teaspoon per day is all you need to increase your immune system's activity.

XPC is available in 50-pound bags from DuBois Distributors, in Huntingburg, IN. You can contact them through their Web site at www.duboisdistributors.com, or call them at 800-264-3772. Remember that this product is being sold as an animal feed item, so please don't ask them any questions about human use.

As you can imagine, a 50-pound bag will last you (and your family, and your friends and neighbors) quite some time. You may prefer to buy a lesser quantity of XPC, but from what I've seen the prices for smaller amounts (one-pound bags, for example) are high enough that you're better off buying the larger bag.

Make sure you're getting enough **vitamin D**. For at least the last 15 years I've been harping on the widespread vitamin D deficiency in this country and the dire need for supplementation. Conservative estimates are that at least 40 percent of the US population is deficient in vitamin D. With respect to flu virus infections, research has

shown that infections peak when vitamin D levels are at their lowest, generally in the month of March and April, and infections are lowest during months when vitamin D levels are highest (during late summer to September). (*Virol J* 08;5:29) (*Epidemiol Infect* 06;134:1129–1140)

Studies have shown that this "seasonality" associated with flu incidence can be abolished by supplementing the diet with just an additional 2,000 IU of vitamin D per day. (*Epidemiol Infect* 07;135:1095–1096)

For someone without the flu, the following are the recommended daily maintenance doses:

- 1,000 IU for children under 2 years old
- 2,000 IU for children over 2 years old
- 3,000 IU for individuals weighing 80 to 130 lbs.
- 4,000 IU for individuals weighing 130 to 170 lbs.
- 5,000 IU for individuals weighing over 170 lbs.

For an adult who contracts the flu, the dosage can be increased to 50,000 IU for three days and then reduced back to the above dosage. Doses for children can be adjusted accordingly. (*Altern Med Rev* 08;13:6–20)

If 50,000 IU a day for three days sounds excessive, consider the following.

Studies have shown that taking 50,000 IU of vitamin D a day for six weeks resulted in no signs of toxicity whatsoever. And single injections of 600,000 IU have been recommended and used to prevent deficiencies in the elderly without any problems as well. A single full-body tanning session even triggers the formation of around 20,000 IU of vitamin D. (*NEJM* 82;06:722–725) (*Osteoporos Int* 98;8:222–230) (*Br Med J* 85;290:281–282)

Vitamin D is essential in fighting infections and keeping your immune system active. We now know that vitamin D is an essential element required by our immune systems to produce NK (natural killer) cells, our first line of defense against invading pathogens. (*Proc Natl Acad Sci USA* 08;105:5207–5212)

Vitamin D also stimulates the body's natural production of various protein compounds that effectively destroy viruses and other pathogens. Increasing your vitamin D intake to 50,000 IU per day for the first three days after being infected is probably one of the most underutilized, yet effective, methods of treating the flu.

Not only that, vitamin D is inexpensive. It's readily available in single doses of 5,000 IU, which is great for daily maintenance. Currently, however, I'm aware of only one product that provides 50,000 IU in a single dose. The product is marketed under the name

Bio-Tech-Pharm and is available from LifeSpan Nutrition at either www.lifespannutrition.com or by calling 800-247-5731. Vitamin D is also available in liquid formulation, as Liqui-D3, from Rx Vitamins. Each drop contains 2,000 IU of vitamin D3, the form your body makes on its own when given the chance. The product is available from Naturamart, on the Web at www.naturamart.com or 800-383-6008.

Sardines, by the way, are an excellent food source of vitamin D. I highly recommend them, even though on their own they won't provide the total amount of vitamin D needed each day.

Make sure you're taking adequate amounts of **selenium**. Look at your current multi-vitamin/mineral supplement and take an additional selenium supplement, if necessary, to ensure you're getting between 200 and 400 micrograms (mcg) per day. Selenium is another very inexpensive supplement. The above recommended doses will run about \$1 a month. One excellent product is NSI Selenium Select, available online at www.vitacost.com or 800-381-0759. A 300-count bottle will run you around \$10, and will last for about 10 months.

Brazil nuts are also an excellent source of selenium, and generally provide about 100 mcg per nut.

Adequate amounts of selenium impede the survival and replication of viruses and increase your **glutathione** levels—which seem to be one of the best single indicators of one's ability to both prevent and overcome disease, slow the aging process, and increase longevity.

Additionally, you can increase your levels of glutathione by consuming high-quality whey protein or by supplementing with N-acetylcysteine. From a food aspect you can achieve many of the same effects by increasing your intake of cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, and mustard or collard greens.

Vitamin C is one item you need to keep on hand as well. Large amounts of vitamin C can cause loose stools, so if you find that it's having that effect on you, cut back on your dosage until your stool returns to normal. As your body becomes accustomed to the higher amount, you can gradually increase your intake. High oral doses to bowel tolerance should be used by young and old alike if the flu is contracted.

Using vitamin C for gargling and as a nasal wash is also inexpensive and beneficial.

The best value is buying bulk powdered vitamin C. Pure ascorbic acid crystals are available from Wholesale Nutrition, at www.nutri.com or 800-325-2664. One

quarter teaspoon of the crystals equals one gram (1,000 mg) of vitamin C.

There are several good chewable products such as the fruit-flavored ones from Freeda Vitamins that kids will take and enjoy as well. You can contact them at 800-777-3737 or www.freedavitamins.com.

More Sensible Steps

In addition to the above items, there are a few specific things that I would recommend doing when a threat like this swine flu is imminent or if you feel you may be starting to get any type of infection.

Now would be a good time to start adding more raw and cooked garlic and onions to your diet. They are nature's antibiotics. While the threat is present I would also suggest using the nasal wash Xlear on a regular daily basis. Not only does it help flush pathogens from the upper respiratory tract, but bacteria feed on its xylitol component—making them less virulent and harmful.

At the first sign of a possible infection, or if a family or household member contracts the flu, then it's time to take a much more active stance.

The symptoms of swine flu are basically the same as for other flu strains: fever over 100 degrees F, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, loss of appetite, and possibly diarrhea and vomiting.

As I mentioned above, immediately increase your vitamin D consumption to 50,000 IU for three days before returning to the regular dosage. Increase the frequency of Xlear nasal wash use. Add two teaspoons four times a day of an elderberry extract such as Sambucol or Sambucus. Crank up the vaporizer and flood the room/house with eucalyptus fumes. (Breathing eucalyptus fumes has saved me on numerous occasions. Misting a tissue or the inside of a facial mask, or confining yourself to a closet, sauna, or small room that has a high concentration of eucalyptus several times a day, can work wonders.)

I particularly like the V-Vax eucalyptus product, but others may work just as well. I'm constantly evaluating different brands trying to find the best value and will let you know what I discover.

The Key to Coping

If you take nothing else from this issue, or pass nothing else along to your friends and loved ones, let it be this: In a world of pathogens and disease outbreaks, the key to survival is your immune system, plain and simple.

Some of the recommendations I've covered—such as better hygiene, sanitizing measures, extra rest, avoiding vaccines, isolation, et cetera—lessen the overall

load placed on your immune system. Some—like Xlear nasal wash, selenium, zinc, and garlic—help by either directly destroying pathogens and/or preventing them from mutating into more virulent forms. Others, like vitamin D, give your immune system the raw materials to operate more effectively. Proper nutrition, exercise, and a good supplement plan help to strengthen your immune system. However, there is one natural product that gives your immune system an almost immediate and sustained boost unlike any other compound, natural or synthetic, that I have ever encountered. Under the most dire of circumstances it could truly be the ultimate lifesaver.

Mushrooms to the Rescue

I've written before about the hybridized mushroom extract called AHCC (active hexose correlated compound) when it comes to fighting cancer and even AIDS. It is sold under the name ImmPower. To my knowledge, AHCC has been shown to be one of the most powerful immune boosters to date.

Whenever the body is “invaded,” whether it's a virus like the H1N1 flu, some form of bacteria, or a cancer cell, the first line of defense from your immune system is the natural killer (NK) cells. It's their job to seek out, confront, and destroy the “invaders.”

Each NK cell contains several small granules that you could equate with grenades. When the cell recognizes an invader such as a flu virus, it attaches to the outer membrane and injects these granules into the virus. The granules then “explode” and destroy the virus (or bacterium, fungus, or cancer cell). The NK cell then moves to the next pathogen and repeats the process. The degree of activity of your NK cells ultimately determines your ability to survive and defeat the problem. Researchers have now shown that NK cell activity is one of the main criteria for estimating one's ability to survive a bacterial, fungal, or viral infection, as well as cancer. As such, tests have been developed to determine the level of NK cell activity.

Numerous research studies have proven that AHCC can quickly and very dramatically increase NK cell activity. What makes this research even more noteworthy is the fact that two of the latest research studies involved H1N1 strains of flu. This is similar to the strain we currently have to deal with as the swine flu. (*Nutr Rev* 08; 66:526–531) (*J Nutr* 06;136:2868–2873)

It's also worth mentioning that, to date, AHCC has also been tested and found to be effective as a potent countermeasure against: the H5N1 viral strain, which is associated with avian or bird flu; *Klebsiella pneumoniae*; *Candida albicans*; *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*; and the

antibiotic-resistant form of *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). As you can imagine, AHCC not only helps knock out the various flu threats, but also deals with the secondary infections that often prove to be the most dangerous and, ultimately, produce the most fatalities.

Researchers at Drexel University in Philadelphia found that AHCC's ability to increase NK cell activity was the key element in both reducing the severity of flu infection and in helping to clear the virus from the lungs. NK cell activity started to increase immediately upon administering the product and peaked in as little as 48 hours.

I've had numerous discussions with those working with AHCC about what dosages should be used during bouts of the flu. The researchers feel that to achieve the effects seen in the above studies an initial dose of 3 grams a day for two weeks and then dropping to 1 gram a day would represent the “equivalent human” dosage. The research indicates that once the NK cell activity ramps up it will continue to increase and stay at the higher levels, even on the lower maintenance dose. (*Nutr Rev* 09;29:139–143 and private communications)

Since there are only 30 500-mg capsules to a bottle, aggressively treating the flu would require 2 to 3 bottles. It's definitely more expensive than the other recommendations, but far less than a round of the antiviral medications being used—and since you're working in harmony with the body, you also avoid the dangerous side effects associated with the drugs. And, from a different perspective, AHCC/ImmPower “empowers” you with the ability to address these problems on your own.

I've written about AHCC in the past and how it has helped numerous individuals fighting cancer, various infections, and other problems. It's one of those products where keeping a few bottles on hand could save your life one day. I keep enough to treat my family and a few friends if the need arises. I recommend you do the same if possible. (It's worth mentioning here that ImmPower is safe and effective for children as well as for adults. Adjust the dosage downward to account for a smaller person's body weight.)

I found it interesting that, when I was getting an update on the latest research and availability of ImmPower from the manufacturers, I found out that following the news of this latest flu outbreak, the researchers at Drexel University immediately ordered several cases of ImmPower for their personal protection. After putting it to the test, they obviously see the value of keeping a personal supply on hand for themselves and their loved ones.

The AHCC product ImmPower is available from The Harmony Company, PO Box 93, Northvale, NJ 07447. You can contact them by phone at 888-809-1241. A bottle of 30 capsules is regularly \$49.95 plus \$9.95 for shipping and handling. As a special benefit for *Alternatives* subscribers, they are now offering a 10 percent discount and free shipping. Use the code DRWSWI to get the discount.

Plan Ahead to Be Prepared

Most of what I've written here has focused specifically on measures you can take to address a potential outbreak of disease. As I've hinted at throughout, however, disease is not the only situation that can disrupt the routines of our society such as utilities, communication, transportation, and food availability.

Most areas of the country are familiar with the various nature-related situations that can leave you without the basics for days at a time: snowstorms, hurricanes or tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes. Watching news coverage of the various situations, including this spring's floods in the upper Midwest and the hurricanes of last summer and fall, brings back vivid memories of my personal experiences of traveling in numerous third-world countries. I don't think most people in our country realize just how fragile the social order actually is, and how quickly disaster, chaos, or panic can disrupt it.

While I don't want to be a doomsayer by any means, I am a realist. And in this day and age, I strongly feel it's imperative that you be aware of certain steps you can take that will allow both you and your family to survive a catastrophe—whether it's a viral pandemic, a natural disaster, a nuclear attack, or whatever.

I've covered several "survival" tactics in past issues, and I'll continue to do so as they come to my attention. For instance, in the north, peanut butter and a sleeping bag (or a three-dollar "space blanket") can be winter life-savers that should be stored in the trunk of your car.

One of your greatest needs in times of disaster is drinking water. It's a good idea to keep several boxes of new, clean, white trash bags on hand. Place opened bags in your empty dresser drawers, cardboard boxes, and other empty containers (anything that will help support the bag once you fill it with water). Then, take each container to the bathtub and fill the bag with water from the tap while you still have electricity and water pressure—but be sure you don't fill the bag so full that you won't be able to lift the supporting container out of the tub. Using this method, it's easy to store several hundred gallons in a relatively short period of time.

Another basic piece of equipment (along with flashlights, rechargeable batteries, et cetera) that I consider vital in any disaster or emergency situation is a radio. When the televisions and computers go off, most people lose their link to the outside world. Keeping abreast of what efforts are underway to restore power, order, et cetera is not only comforting, it's a big part of being able to adapt and survive. Look for a radio that has a built-in hand-crank generator so you're not relying on outside electricity or using up your batteries. (Built-in solar panels also work well.) With many, you not only receive the standard AM and FM radio stations, you can also receive the audio portion of local television channels 2 through 13, short-wave radio, and NOAA weather alerts.

I have a couple of these emergency radios, and a few flashlights with built-in hand chargers as well. My favorite radio is the Eton FR300. It's hand crank-powered, and has all the features I mentioned above except the short-wave reception. It does, however, include a built-in LED flashlight. The retail price of this particular radio is around \$70, but you can often find it for closer to \$50. You should be able to find one at electronics stores, or on the Internet at *Amazon.com*. or *www.NextPowerUSA.com*.

You can find various emergency kits available from any number of sources online. I've found a kit that I particularly like, and have made it available to *Alternatives* readers. You can get more information by calling Mountain Home Solutions at 800-718-8293. Again, to quote my dad, "It's cheap insurance," and it's best to be prepared.

I obviously can't cover all the information about survival here. If you want a quick lesson on what items are truly important in a short-term crisis, tape your refrigerator and freezer shut, turn off your water supply, and shut off all the electrical breakers except your refrigerator/freezer. Live under those circumstances for 24 to 48 hours and learn what changes and adjustments you need to make to survive. You'll probably be more prepared for a genuine emergency than 95 percent of the general population. [*Editor's note: For more guidance on preparing for any type of emergency, visit the Subscriber Center of the Alternatives Web site, www.drdauidwilliams.com.*]

Stock Up to Be Prepared

One other area that I'd like to mention has to do with food storage and supply. Over the years, I've discussed the idea of keeping enough food in your pantry to enable you to be independent for at least a couple of weeks, and longer if possible. Canned goods and other bulk items can go a long way in that regard, and you shouldn't have much waste if you learn to use and rotate the various

items. The same holds true for extra vitamins or any medications you rely on.

If you can afford it, I strongly recommend having enough food on hand to last a couple of months or longer. No one knows what surprises the future may hold. Those living in New Orleans never expected the magnitude of the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina. The same holds true for those who have had to go through other hurricanes, or tornadoes, floods, civil unrest, or pandemics. They've learned the hard way. Having an emergency food supply on hand means you don't have to go to town if you don't want to; you're also covered in the event you are unable to do so.

There are several companies that sell survival food plans. I have purchased and sampled many of these different products over the years. Most are overpriced and not always of the best quality. In today's uncertain climate, most are also backlogged with orders, which seems to drive up the prices.

One of the best companies I can recommend (and personally use) is called Best Prices Storable Foods, P.O. Box 3182, Quinlan, Texas 75474. You can contact them by phone at 903-356-6443, or over the Internet at www.internet-grocer.net. I've found their service and prices to be some of the best ever. And just as important, if not more so, the taste and quality of their food products is excellent.

They offer individual items in addition to monthly and yearly food packs. For example a three-month food supply for one person sells for \$329. A year's supply of food for four is \$3,999. Their products have a shelf life of 7 to 15 years. (Similar programs from other suppliers can run as high as \$16,000 to \$20,000.)

I also like the idea that they offer sample packs that allow you to prepare and taste many of the foods before you commit to purchasing larger quantities.

Another excellent product they offer is a package of non-hybrid seeds of various vegetables for starting your own garden. Unlike most seeds available today, the non-

hybrid types enable you to collect your own seeds for replanting over and over again, if the need ever arises.

No freeze-dried food package plans are perfect. But for the money theirs is hard to beat. Supplementing their program with a few additional items like canned meat, butter, and cheese; some cooking oil; and a few bulk grains will result in one of the most well-rounded programs that I've seen so far.

I fully understand that not everyone can afford to purchase a long-term backup food supply. But by buying a few extra canned goods and selected items at each visit to the grocery, everyone should be able to create at least a couple of weeks of extra food supply. The last thing you want to have to worry about in any crisis is having enough food on hand to "ride out the storm." If you have computer access, just reading the information on Best Prices' Web site will give you a good idea of the types of foods and other items you might need to keep on hand.

As I said earlier...don't panic. But don't sit idly by either and get caught off guard. The best intentions without any actions will be no good when a crisis arises. Hopefully this particular strain of flu will fizzle out, but no one knows if that will be the case. As we approach the summer months, generally the incidence of flu begins to wane. In other parts of the world, however, such as Australia, their winter is just starting. This bug could build up steam and hit again later in a few months or next winter. Sooner rather than later, we'll be faced with a serious problem—and the sooner you make the right preparations the better.

I'm not trying to scare anyone with wild, doomsday predictions. My job is to help separate the facts from the fiction and show you how to "weather the storms." And with the right knowledge and preparations I'm certain we can successfully do that together. My family and I follow the exact same advice that I pass along to you.

Take care,

Dr. David Williams

If you have questions or comments for Dr. Williams, please send them to the mail or e-mail addresses listed to the right. Of course, practical and ethical constraints prevent him from answering personal medical questions by mail or e-mail, but he'll answer as many as he can in the Mailbox section of *Alternatives*. For our part, we'll do our best to direct you to his issues, reports, and products related to the subject of your interest.

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