

***Contagion*: Facts Behind the Fiction**

This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

While the movie *Contagion* is a fictional account of an outbreak of a dangerous infectious disease occurring globally, the real-life stories of CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service are just as exciting as the one on the screen. The movie is not a documentary, but there are some important facts behind the fiction.

Contagious disease outbreaks *can* and *do* happen. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention investigates contagious diseases every year. They can emerge in the US or anywhere on the planet, just a plane ride away from spreading globally.

Thankfully, a network of public health officials work together to protect the health of Americans. State and local health departments are our front-line heroes, and CDC stands ready to respond. CDC scientists work 24-7 to find out what is happening *right now*. Early detection allows public health officials to manage and reduce the spread and impact of a contagious disease.

Here's how *you* can help slow the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands often with lots of soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your arm.
- If you or your kids are sick, stay home from work or school.
- In an extreme situation where germs are spreading rapidly, like in a flu pandemic, your community may use social distancing to increase space between people. This can be done by changing seating arrangements; schedules; or attendance in places where people gather, like schools and businesses. Schools might be temporarily closed and mass gatherings, such as sporting events, may be cancelled.
- In the case of flu, vaccination is the *best* way to protect yourself and your family. Some groups are at higher risk for complications from the flu. These include pregnant women; adults 65 and older; children younger than five, especially children younger than two years old; and people with certain chronic medical conditions, like cancer, diabetes, asthma, and HIV/AIDS. Since babies younger than six months can't get a flu shot, family and caretakers can help keep them healthy by getting themselves vaccinated. Check with your health care provider right away about getting your family vaccinated against the flu.

For more information from CDC, related to the movie *Contagion*, visit www.cdc.gov and type "contagion" in the search box, that's c-o-n-t-a-g-i-o-n.

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.