



UNDERSTANDING PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

Pandemic influenza is currently one of the most passionately discussed topics in public health as the H5N1 avian flu virus has begun to be transmissible to humans. As the threat of pandemic influenza becomes more and more real, it is imperative that the public—and especially healthcare professionals—gain a basic understanding of how the influenza virus can mutate and eventually result in a pandemic. The goals of providing this basic understanding of pandemic flu include dispelling unfounded myths about avian flu and pandemic influenza, as well as providing background knowledge on which to base decision-making in the healthcare industry as related to pandemic planning and preparedness. To that end, the Roche INSIGHTS *Understanding Pandemic Influenza* program reviews the basic etiology and mutation ability of the influenza virus, pandemic patterns in history, the potential impact of an influenza pandemic on the United States, and current preparations under way to curb this impact.

Program Objectives:

- Recognize how viral mutations occur and can lead to widespread infection
- Differentiate between viral antigenic “drift” and “shift”
- Define and recognize a pandemic and evaluate the likelihood of another influenza pandemic occurring
- Evaluate the potential clinical and financial burdens of a pandemic influenza
- Assess current preparations for pandemic influenza



Pharmaceuticals