


# Pandemic Flu and Protocol 36


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**KEY QUESTIONS**

1. Is s/he **completely alert** (responding appropriately)?
2. **(Difficulty breathing)** Describe to me what her/his breathing is like.
  - a. **(INEFFECTIVE)** Did s/he have **any flu symptoms** prior to this?
 

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 

No \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is s/he **changing color**?
  - a. **(Yes)** Describe the color change.
4. Does s/he have a **fever (hot to touch)** in room temperature?
5. Does s/he have a **new cough** that **recently** started?
6. Does s/he have a **sore throat**? \* per Rule 2
7. Does s/he have **body aches**? 
8. Does s/he have a **runny** or **stuffy nose**?
9. Does s/he have **diarrhea**?
10. Is s/he **vomiting**?
11. Is s/he having **chills** or **sweats**?
12. Does s/he have a **headache**?
  - a. **(Yes & no other flu symptoms)** Was there a **sudden onset of severe pain**?
 

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No flu symptoms in KQ 4-12 \_\_\_\_\_

36-D-1  
6

18  
CC

**POST-DISPATCH INSTRUCTIONS**



- a. **(If regular dispatch)** I'm sending the **paramedics** (ambulance) to help you now. **Stay on the line** and I'll tell you **exactly** what to do next.
- b. **(If reduced/limited dispatch)** I'm **arranging care** for you now. An ambulance (or Care Van) will come to check you **when they are available**. This might take (several hours).
- c. **(If quarantine and no dispatch)** Because of the extent of the flu epidemic, an **ambulance cannot be sent** to you. I will **connect** you to a **flu care specialist** who will advise you on what to do.
- d. **(Patient medication requested and Alert)** Remind her/him to do what her/his **doctor has instructed** for these situations.
- e. **(≥ 1 + DELTA)** If there is a **defibrillator** (AED) available, **send** someone to get it **now** in case we need it later.

DLS \* Link to  X-1 unless: 

INEFFECTIVE BREATHING and Not alert  **ABC-1**

LEVELS	#	DETERMINANT DESCRIPTORS	➔ A B C	CODES	LEVEL 1 (A)	LEVEL 2 (B)	LEVEL 3 (C)
<b>D</b>	1	<b>INEFFECTIVE BREATHING</b> with flu symptoms		36-D-1			
	2	<b>Not alert</b> with flu symptoms		36-D-2			
	3	<b>DIFFICULTY SPEAKING BETWEEN BREATHS</b> with flu symptoms		36-D-3			
	4	<b>CHANGING COLOR</b> with flu symptoms		36-D-4			
<b>C</b>	1	<b>Chest pain ≥ 35</b> with <b>single</b> flu symptom		36-C-1			
	2	<b>Abnormal breathing</b> with <b>single</b> flu symptom or <b>Asthma</b>		36-C-2			
<b>A</b>	1	<b>Chest pain ≥ 35</b> with <b>multiple</b> flu symptoms		36-A-1			
	2	<b>Chest pain &lt; 35</b> with <b>single</b> flu symptom		36-A-2			
	3	<b>Abnormal breathing</b> with <b>multiple</b> flu symptoms		36-A-3			
<b>Ω</b>	1	Flu symptoms <b>only</b> (cough, fever, chills or sweats, sore throat, diarrhea, body aches, headache, etc.)		36-Ω-1			
	2	<b>Chest pain &lt; 35</b> with <b>multiple</b> flu symptoms		36-Ω-2			

## ➔ Flu Triage Level Suffixes

Locally enacted Pandemic/Epidemic/Outbreak **Flu Triage Level** designations may affect your agency's **response** assignment. These suffixes allow for **locally** designated, potentially **different levels** of patient **triage**:

- A** = Triage Level 1 (low)
- B** = Triage Level 2 (moderate)
- C** = Triage Level 3 (high)

## INEFFECTIVE BREATHING (modified definition for Protocol 36 only)

The following, when **determined** at any point during interrogation (go to Protocol **36** from Case Entry **only** if the patient is **conscious**):

- "Barely breathing"
- "Can't breathe at all"
- "Fighting for air"
- "Gasping for air" (**AGONAL BREATHING**)
- "Just a little" (**AGONAL BREATHING**)
- "Making funny noises" (**AGONAL BREATHING**)
- "Not breathing"
- "Turning blue or purple"

## DIFFICULTY SPEAKING BETWEEN BREATHS

Can also be described as:

- Unable to **complete a full sentence** without taking a breath
- Only able to **speak a few words** without taking a breath
- Breathing attempts that **severely hinder** crying in infants and small children

## CHANGING COLOR

Changing colors of **clinical significance** include:

- Ashen/Gray
- Blue/Cyanotic/Purple
- Mottled

(Pale, pink, and red are not colors of clinical significance in the dispatch environment and will not, alone, change the dispatch priority. Callers failing to initially identify a listed color should not be coached by asking unlisted clarifiers such as "Well, is s/he gray?")

### Pandemic

An epidemic that becomes **widespread**, affecting an **entire region, continent, or the world**.

### Epidemic

A **sudden outbreak** of a disease or an **unusually large number** of disease cases in a **single community or relatively small area**. Disease may spread from person to person and/or through the exposure of many persons to a single source, such as a water supply.

### Outbreak

A **sudden increase** in the number of disease cases, or occurrence of a **larger than expected number** of cases, within a **short period** of time.

### Rules

1. Once it is officially enacted that **local response triage** will begin, **use Protocol 36** for the medical Chief Complaints of **breathing problems, chest pain, headache, and sickness**. Do not go to Protocols 6, 10, 18, or 26 unless Protocol 36 directs you there.
2. Once **two flu symptoms** in Key Questions 4–12 have been identified, choose the appropriate **Determinant Code**, **skipping the rest** of the questions. If **positive flu symptoms** were **mentioned in Case Entry**, these Key Questions **do not have to be asked again**. More than one flu symptom **creates a higher**

**likelihood** that the Chief Complaint is actually the flu.

3. If **initial information** identifies the Chief Complaint as **Breathing Problems** (6), **Chest Pain** (10), **Headache** (18), or **Sick Person** (26), and other flu symptoms are **not identified**, return to the **original Chief Complaint** and **complete the call**.
4. If the patient had a **fever** but took aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Motrin), **and the fever is now gone**, answer the fever Key Question as **"yes"**.
5. If the complaint is **Chest Pain** ( $\geq 35$ ) and either **sweats** or **vomiting** are later identified, **go to Protocol 10** and complete the call. While these are symptoms of flu, they may also be **present in heart attacks**.

## Axioms

1. It is predicted that a pandemic, epidemic, or outbreak will cause an **increase** in the number of **severe breathing problems** reported (more 6-D-1 cases) **unless Protocol 36 triage is implemented**.
2. When contracted from a **bird**, avian influenza A (H5N1) has a **60% mortality rate**.
3. **Human-to-human** transmission of the avian influenza virus is currently **very rare**.

**Flu Symptoms** (may be updated as more is known about specific symptoms at the time of an outbreak)

Common symptoms of the **current H1N1 (swine flu) illness** based on the latest information from government health agencies:

- Body aches
- Chest pain
- Chills or sweats
- Cough (recent onset)
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty breathing
- Fever ( $>100^{\circ}$  F/ $38^{\circ}$  C)
- Headache
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Sore throat
- Vomiting