Virulent H1N1 influenza virus has spread to 74 countries, infecting almost 400,000 people and killing 1,600. This high mortality rate and rapidly spreading nature are unprecedented for an influenza virus. The virus is thought to be highly contagious, and many experts predict it will become endemic in the northern hemisphere over the next year.

Public Health Officials

Over the past century, the flu has killed between 500,000 and 50 million people in pandemics. The 1918 pandemic of what is now called the Spanish flu killed up to 50 million people. Officials are preparing to spent over $1 billion on flu vaccines this year.

Epidemic Flu in the United States

While the flu is not nearly as deadly as H1N1, it is still the leading cause of death in the United States. The CDC has estimated that more than 36,000 people died of flu last season.

Seasonal Flu

Seasonal flu is caused by three different flu viruses: A, B, and C. Each year, the virus strain changes and the CDC recommends getting a flu shot to prevent the flu each year.

Preventing the Flu

There are several ways to prevent the flu. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent the flu. This year's flu shot is available now, and it is recommended for everyone 6 months and older.

Handwashing and Taking Care of One's Health

Regular handwashing and taking care of one's health can help prevent the flu from spreading. Taking vitamins and supplements can help keep one healthy and prevent illness.

Flu Shot Availability

Flu shots are available at many locations, including pharmacies, doctor's offices, and clinics. For the latest information on flu shot availability, visit the CDC website.
New Jersey residents many opportunities to play a role in wildlife conservation projects, for example, or by supporting conservation actions and groups, private landowners and other members of the public, helped New Jersey's Endangered and Nongame Species Program, which currently receives roughly $3 million annually. A draft of New Jersey's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy was completed in 2005, focusing on priority species and habitats and laying out specific goals for the program. The strategy will be updated in collaboration with scientists and the public. To view the draft plan at www.njfishandwildlife.com and become involved in the effort, contact the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection at (609) 292-0003.

The Blueprint for Success: New Jersey's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy is a framework for identifying fish and wildlife species and habitats in greatest need of conservation, for prioritizing efforts to conserve them, and for measuring and reporting success. It was developed through a collaborative process involving state agencies, local governments, and non-governmental organizations. The Blueprint is a work in progress and will be updated as new information becomes available.

Help the Kestrels

Kestrels are often seen as helpful predators of small mammals like mice and voles, and are considered a keystone species – critical to the balance of bird populations within healthy functioning ecosystems. To find out how you can become a Citizen Scientist volunteer, please call Larissa Smith at (609) 628-2103 or llsmith@gtc3.com.

New Jersey's Endangered and Nongame Species Program is working to restore breeding populations of kestrels in central New Jersey, a region that is a critical breeding area for this species in the state.

New Jersey's Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Survey project is working to identify the declining populations of kestrels in New Jersey in order to determine the population trends and distribution of the kestrel.

To find out how you can participate in the survey, please contact Larissa Smith at (609) 628-2103 or llsmith@gtc3.com.