



# NORTH HEALTH DISTRICT

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Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns Union, and White Counties

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### FOR PERSONS COMING TO A POD (Point of Dispensing)

#### **What is a POD?**

A POD (Point of Dispensing) is a building where medicines or vaccines can be given to a large number of people in a short period of time. The POD should have plenty of parking and easy access coming into and out of the property. The building should be easily accessible for all people – even those with disabilities and have amenities such as heat and air conditioning, adequate rest room facilities, and seating.

#### **Why would I have to go to a POD?**

During a public health emergency, it may become necessary to give medicines to a large number of people who have been exposed to a potentially harmful chemical, germ or disease. If people are exposed to any harmful agent, they will be given instructions about where to go to receive medicines, what to bring to the POD and what not to bring to the POD.

#### **What types of medicines might I be given at the POD?**

The public will be given appropriate preventive medications for the type of agent they have been exposed to. Preventive medicines could be antibiotics, anti-virals, or vaccines. *For example, when postal workers were exposed to Anthrax in 2001, they were given the appropriate antibiotic to stop the germ from making them sick. If exposed people are treated early with preventive medicines, then they have a lower risk of becoming ill.*

#### **Can I pick up medicine for my entire family at the POD?**

Yes, the head of household can pick up medicine for the entire family. This will reduce the number of people at the POD and speed up the process of getting medicines.

#### **How much will the medicines cost?**

The medicines will be provided at no cost to you or your family. The Federal Government established the Strategic National Stockpile in the event of a bioterrorism attack or a widespread disease outbreak. Under this program, medicines will be supplied at no cost.

#### **Should I bring my children?**

No. There is no need to bring children to the POD. You should bring their medical history, height, weight and any medications that they are taking. Health care workers will need this information to make sure they prescribe medicines safely.

#### **What if I have symptoms?**

If you have symptoms, DO NOT come to the POD. Instead, you should go to a treatment center. If you have symptoms, you are past the point where preventive medicines will help you and you will need treatment.

### **What should I bring to the POD?**

The head of household can pick up medicines for the entire family. They should the following:

- completed medical form for each family member
  - forms are available at [www.phdistrict2.org](http://www.phdistrict2.org)
  - forms are also available at the POD, but you will have to complete them there
- identification with photograph
- list of family member's ages, weight, height, and any medical conditions
- list of allergies for each family member
- list of medications that each family member is taking
- list of any medical conditions that each family member may have
- items that you need for the day – medicines, water, snack, etc....

### **What should I never bring to a POD?**

- No pets or animals, except service animals such as seeing-eye dogs, etc..
- No firearms, knives or weapons of any kind
- No alcohol or illegal drugs
- No valuables – large amounts of money, electronics, jewelry, etc...
- No large bags
- No unnecessary items

### **Where is the POD in my county?**

Each county in the District 2 Public Health area has identified facilities to be used as PODs. The POD location will be determined at the time of an event. The POD will be as far from the incident as possible so that response workers can do their job and to also lower the risk of potentially exposing more people.

### **How will I know where the POD is located?**

Upon the need to open a POD, public health will initiate a communications plan to reach all residents in the area. This will include, but not be limited to announcements on radio, television, flyers, posters, emails, website postings, cable TV channels, businesses, churches, etc...

### **How will I know what to do?**

Easy to understand instructions and directions will be provided to every person. This will include the reason for getting the medicine and how to take the full course of medicine. Also explained will be what to do if you experience side effects or develop symptoms from being exposed.

### **SAMPLE Message**

A release of [agent name] has occurred in [name] County at the [event or location]. If you were present there during the hours of 00:00 to 00:00 on day, month 2, 2004, you may have been exposed. If you are experiencing these symptoms:

Symptom 1:

Symptom 2:

Symptom 3:

then report to the [blank] County hospital (or other designated treatment center).

If you are not experiencing symptoms, report after 00:00 am to [name of POD and address] to receive preventative medicine. The medicine will be given to you free of charge from the federal repository of the Strategic National Stockpile. Please visit our website [www.phdistrict2.org](http://www.phdistrict2.org) for copies of the patient information form, or pick up a copy at [name locations where forms are available]. Complete the information requested on the form for each member of your family.

There may be many people at the dispensing site when you arrive. Please remain patient and calm, and expect the process to dispense medicines take some time. Health care workers will process your information and give you the medicines as quickly as possible. Heads of households can pick up medicines for the entire family so bring the following information with you:

- 1) Completed medical form for each family member (if possible)
- 2) Identification with photograph
- 3) List of family members ages, weights, and medical conditions
- 4) Medications that you need to take during the day
- 5) List of medications or allergies for yourself and all family members
- 6) Contraindications - what medical conditions you or a family member may have
- 7) Water or a snack if you typically need these through the day

All the requested information is important to process your needs as efficiently as possible. Medications for you and your entire family can be picked up by you – the head of household.

To further help speed up the process, blank health history forms can be obtained and printed from our website [www.phdistrict2.org](http://www.phdistrict2.org).

There are a few things that you should not bring to the dispensing site:

- 1) No pets or animals (except service animals, i.e. seeing-eye dogs)
- 2) No firearms, knives, or weapons of any kind
- 3) No alcohol or illegal drugs
- 4) No valuable items (large amounts of money, electronic devices, etc...)
- 5) No large bags
- 6) No unnecessary items