

# History of influenza pandemics



# History of Influenza

- 412 BC - first mentioned by Hippocrates
- 1580 - first pandemic described
- 1580 - 1900 - 28 pandemics

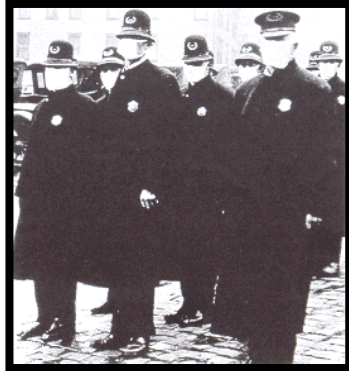


# Influenza pandemics in last century

Year	Strain	Name	Number of confirmed human deaths (UK)	Global deaths
1918-19	H1N1	“Spanish” Flu	250,000	20-40 million
1957-58	H2N2	“Asian” Flu	33,000	1 million
1968-69	H3N2	“Hong Kong” Flu	30,000	1 million



# Circulating Influenza strains and pandemics in 20<sup>th</sup> Century



**1918: “Spanish Flu”**    **1957: “Asian Flu”**    **1968: “Hong Kong Flu”**

20-40 million deaths

1 million deaths

1 million deaths

H1N1

H2N2

H3N2

H1N1

1920

1940

1960

1980

2000



# 1918 Pandemic



The influenza epidemic taxed the resources of The Red Cross.



Military physicians were baffled by the mysterious illness that was striking young, healthy soldiers.



As sailors and soldiers fell ill, doctors puzzled over the mystery illness they were confronting.



# Lessons from past pandemics

- Occurs unpredictably, not always in winter
- Great variations in mortality, severity of illness and pattern of illness or age most severely affected
- Rapid surge in number of cases over brief period of time, often measured in weeks
- Tend to occur in waves - subsequent waves may be more or less severe

**Key lesson - unpredictability**

