

Pandemics in History



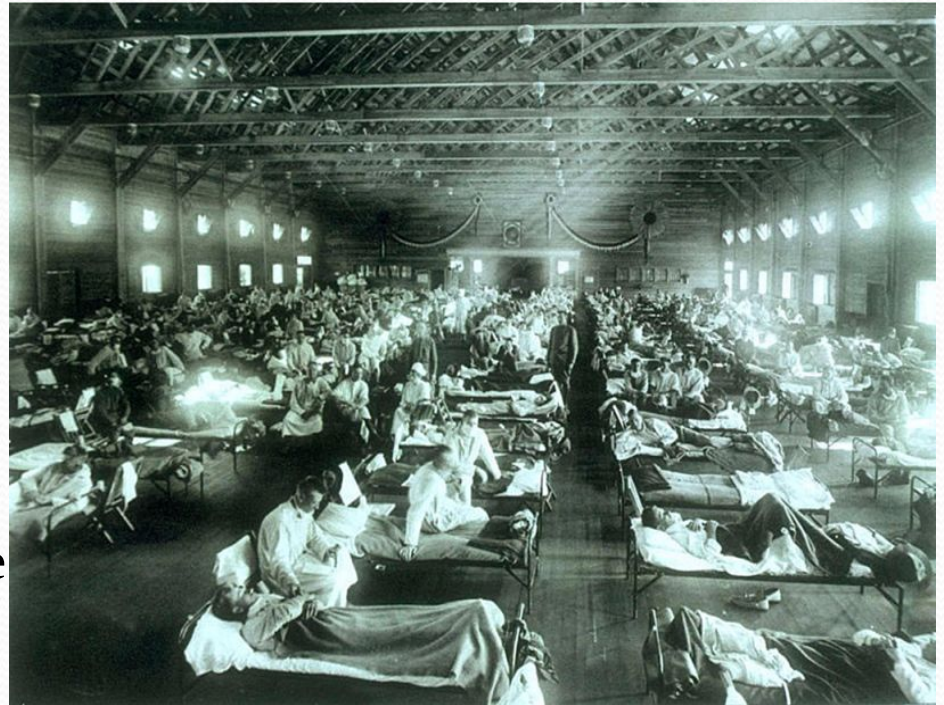
Pandemic Review

- A **pandemic** is the spread of infectious disease across a large area.
- It has occurred more frequently than normal and the effects are more dire than usual.
- A disease is not a pandemic simply because it kills lots of people or occurs in a lot of places, it has to be infectious as well.
- Cancer is not a pandemic disease, whereas AIDS is.



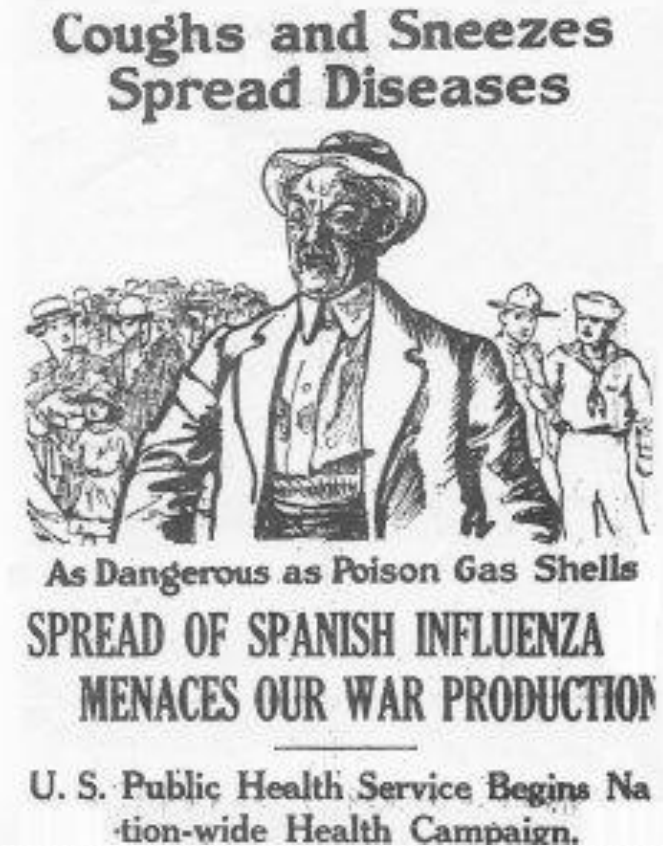
Spanish Flu Pandemic (1918-1920 A.D.)

- During the height of World War I, a shockingly virulent strain of Influenza-A swept the world, spreading quickly to regions as far apart as Asia, Australia, North America, Europe, the Pacific islands and even Arctic territories.
- Whereas most flu epidemics affect weaker populations, such as infants or the elderly, this one involved a mutation that allowed the virus to overtake the immune system and turn it against the victim's body.



Spanish Flu Pandemic (1918-1920 A.D.)

- This resulted in a much higher mortality rate among the otherwise young and healthy, whose immune systems were stronger, as well as a devastating toll on social productivity.
- Everyday life stopped, schools and shops closed, and even gravediggers were too sick to bury the dead.
- In some cases, mass graves were dug using steam shovels, and bodies were buried without coffins.
- The mass infection affected nearly one third of the world's population, causing between 50 million and 100 million deaths – more than all the wars of the 20th century combined!



Spanish Flu Pandemic (1918-1920 A.D.)

- How we would treat it today:
 - 1) Antivirals like Tamiflu and Relenza.
 - 2) Proper hygiene
- This was the first Swine Flu pandemic in history.

