In Response: We agree with Doshi (1) that in our study, reported in Public Response to Community Mitigation Measures for Pandemic Influenza (2), we purposely asked respondents to imagine a “severe outbreak” of “a new type of flu,” and that possible scenario was vastly different from ordinary flu seasons. Although previous pandemics have varied in their severity (3) and their concomitant illness and mortality rates, we were particularly interested in the public’s response to community mitigation interventions (4) that would only be recommended if the severity of the pandemic warranted their use. The survey was conducted to inform policy-makers who were, at the time, developing recommendations for community-based interventions. Thus, a severe pandemic was used as the scenario for this national survey to gauge the public’s response to these proposed public health measures.

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etymologia

**Merkel [mərˈkaʊl] Cells**

Specialized cells found near the dermal-epidermal junction, characterized by numerous membrane-bound granules with dense cores. The cells were named after German anatomy professor Friedrich Sigmund Merkel, who experimented with osmium tetroxide staining and described these cells in 1875. First identified in the skin of a mole, they were later found in human skin. The cells are responsible for the highly malignant skin tumor known as Merkel cell carcinoma. An infectious cause for Merkel cell carcinoma has been proposed.