



FAMILIES  
FIGHTING FLU, INC.<sup>®</sup>

## WEEKLY FLU NEWS

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**December 2, 2019**

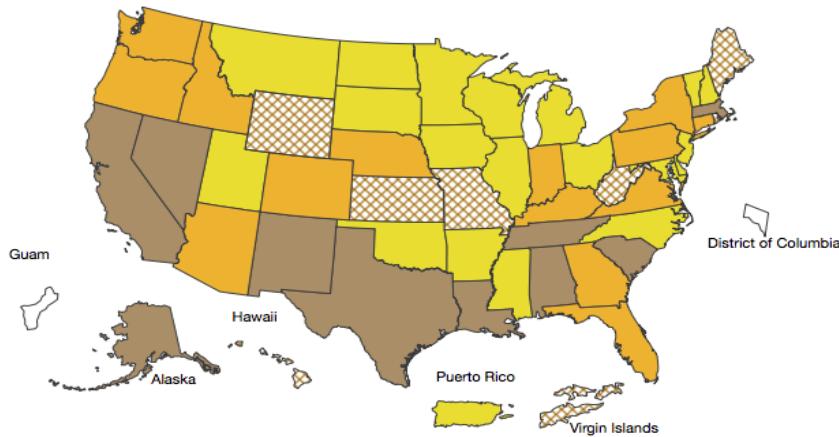


### CDC: Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report: Week 47, Ending Nov. 23, 2019

Dec. 2, 2019; [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

- Seasonal flu activity in the United States continues to increase, but the amount of activity and the predominant influenza viruses vary by region.
- 8.0% of specimens from clinical laboratories tested positive for influenza.
- Nationally, influenza B/Victoria viruses are most common followed by H1N1 and H3N2. Predominant viruses vary by region and age group.
- 2.9% of visits to a health care provider were for influenza-like illness, which is above the national baseline of 2.4%. Four of 10 regions were at or above their baselines.
- Overall hospitalization rate is 2.0 per 100,000, which is similar to past seasons at this time.
- 5.1% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia and influenza, which is below the epidemic threshold of 6.3%.
- One new pediatric flu death was reported for the 2019-2020 season during week 47. The total for the season is 5.

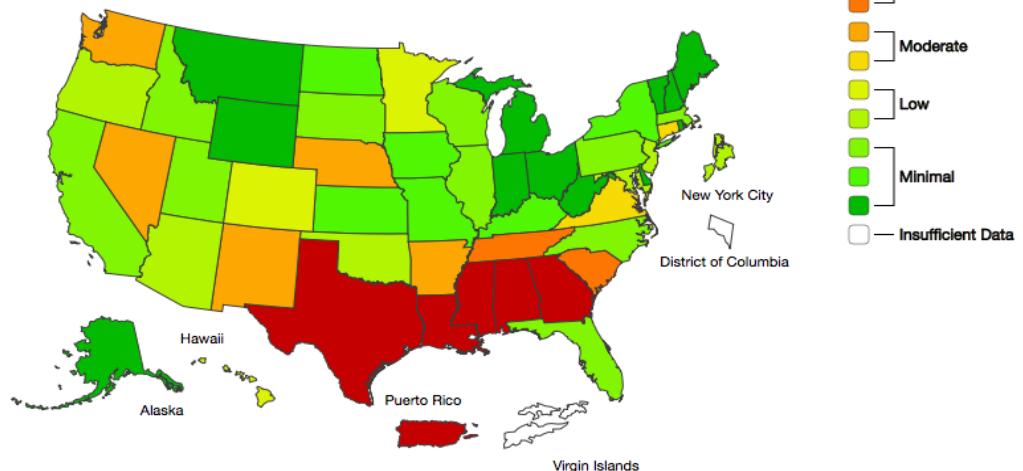
Week Ending Nov 23, 2019 - Week 47



Influenza Activity Estimates

- No Activity
- Sporadic
- Local Activity
- Regional
- Widespread
- No Report

2019-20 Influenza Season Week 47 ending Nov 23, 2019



ILI Activity Level

- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Minimal
- Insufficient Data

## Most states make it difficult for children to get a flu shot

Nov. 26, 2019, CNN

When adults want a flu shot, they have two choices: go to the doctor or go to a pharmacy.

But in most states, laws prevent parents from just walking into a pharmacy and getting their children vaccinated for the flu. Public health experts say that's costing children's lives.

"Parents should have no barriers whatsoever to getting a flu shot," said Dr. Irwin Redlener, director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University. "It's what we'd call a no-brainer."

Currently, 40% of children don't get a flu vaccine, and public health authorities are keen to change that. Flu kills children every year; last year, 143 children lost their lives to the flu.



## Bill allowing pharmacists to give kids the flu shot at risk

Dec. 1, 2019; [SFGate](#)

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — The contentious debate about whether Connecticut lawmakers should scrap a religious exemption for certain childhood vaccinations could inadvertently end up sinking efforts to make the flu vaccine more accessible to children.

A bill that would allow trained pharmacists to administer the influenza vaccine to children 12 years and older cleared the General Assembly's Public Health Committee in a 17-7 vote this year, but it later died on the Senate calendar due to inaction.

Bill supporter, Nathan Tinker, CEO of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association, said his organization doesn't plan to push hard for it again in the next regular legislative session because he is worried the debate over the General Assembly's efforts to scrap a religious exemption for some vaccines will ultimately spill over into discussions about the flu shot and likely doom the bill in the short, three-month session.



## An ‘unusual’ start to flu season: Influenza B predominates early

Nov. 27, 2019; [Healio](#)

The proportion of outpatient visits attributed to influenza-like illness climbed above the national baseline for the first time this season, comprising 2.5% of visits during the week ending Nov. 16, according to CDC FluView data.

Overall, more than half of influenza-positive samples tested at public health laboratories this season have been influenza B viruses. In the week ending Nov. 16 — the most recent week with available data — 63.9% of positive specimens were influenza B viruses.



## AHA News: Flu prevention strategies beyond getting a shot and washing your hands

Nov. 27, 2019; [US News & World Report](#)

American Heart Association (AHA) News -- It's cold and flu season, and the usual advice is being dispensed: Get the influenza vaccine, wash your hands regularly and avoid contact with anyone who's already sick.

But is there anything else we can do?

"You can't be overly cautious," said Dr. Trish Perl, chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. "But you have to be smart. A lot of people don't recognize how serious the flu can be."

During the last flu season – October 2018 through early May 2019 – at least 37.4 million people got the flu. Of those, at least 531,000 were hospitalized and between 36,400 and 61,200 people died, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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## **Building a better flu vaccine -- one you don't have to get every year**

**Nov. 29, 2019; CNN**

On June 24 at 11:34 AM, Michael Sonn became a part of medical history.

That's the day Sonn became one of the first people to receive an experimental flu vaccine that could one day radically change the shot you get every year.

If all goes well, this new shot would last for multiple flu seasons, so you wouldn't have to roll up your sleeve every fall and -- importantly -- it would be more effective than the shot you get now. Way more effective.

While the current flu shot keeps millions of people from getting the flu every year, it's far from perfect.

"Even on a good year, the effectiveness of the vaccine is about 60%. On a bad year, it's as low as 10%," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). "And there's a reason for that."

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## **Border Patrol ignored recommendation to vaccinate migrants against the flu**

**Nov. 26, 2019; The Hill**

Federal immigration authorities ignored a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to vaccinate detained migrants against the flu virus, according to a newly released letter to Congress.

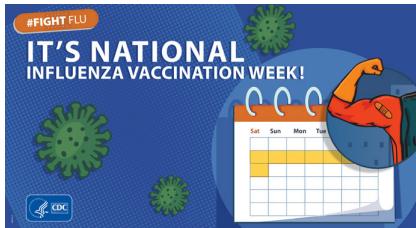
According to the letter from the CDC to Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), the agency recommended that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) deliver flu vaccinations “at the earliest feasible point of entry” for all migrants over the age of six months.

A Border Patrol spokesperson said the agency has never had a policy to vaccinate detained migrants, and has no plans to implement one in the future.

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**HIGHLIGHTS**



## This week is National Influenza Vaccination Week!

National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) highlights the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond.

NIVW serves as a reminder that even though the holiday season has arrived, it's not too late to get a flu vaccine.

As long as flu viruses are spreading and causing illness, vaccination should continue throughout the flu season in order to protect as many people as possible against flu. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine every season. If you haven't already, it's not too late to get a flu vaccine!

Additional information and resources for NIVW can be found on CDC's website [here](#).

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# #GIVING TUESDAY

## Tomorrow is GivingTuesday!

GivingTuesday is a global generosity movement unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and the world on December 3, 2019 and every day.

It was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. Over the past seven years, this idea has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

**Please consider donating to FFF on GivingTuesday!**

DONATE NOW



## #FluShotSelfie Social Media Campaign

**It's not too late to vaccinate!** Join us in our #FluShotSelfie campaign on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to show others how we protect ourselves and others with an annual flu vaccine! Simply use the hashtag and feel free to tag us!



## Flu Champion Program

FFF's [Flu Champion program](#) aims to mobilize and support people at the community level in flu awareness and education efforts. As part of this program, FFF has developed four different advocacy toolkits for schools, healthcare professionals, employers and community

organizations, and general advocates. Interested in becoming a Flu Champion yourself? Reach out to us at [contact@familiesfightingflu.org](mailto:contact@familiesfightingflu.org).

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## #1 holiday hack:

When you buy your gifts  
at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com),  
Amazon donates.

**amazon**smile

Holiday shopping? Choose Families Fighting Flu as a charity on AmazonSmile at no additional cost to you!

