

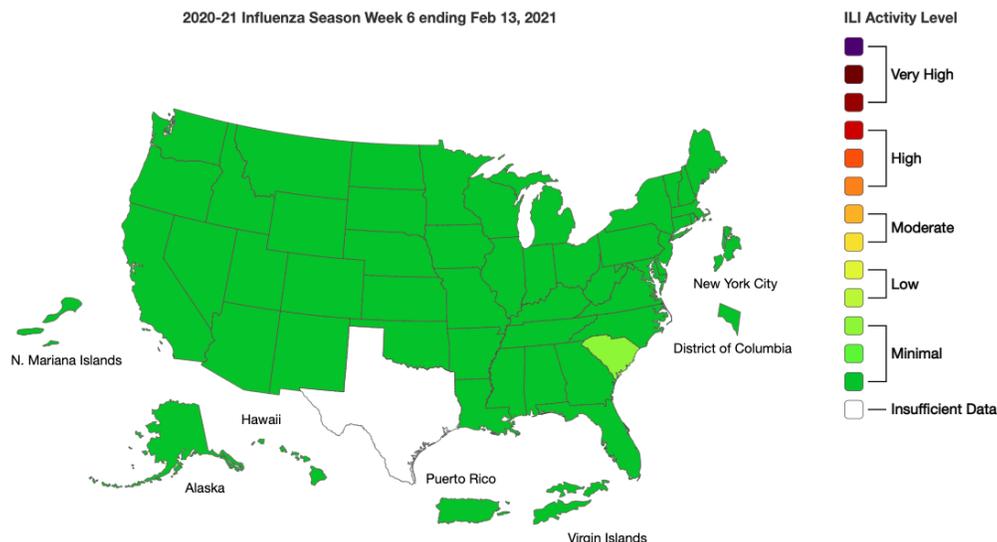


Weekly Flu News



CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report - Week 6 ending February 13, 2021; [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

- Seasonal influenza activity in the United States remains lower than usual for this time of year.
- 0.1% of specimens from clinical laboratories tested positive for influenza this week.
- 1.1% of visits to a health care provider were for influenza-like illness (ILI). ILI remains below the national baseline of 2.6%.
- A total of 173 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations occurring between October 1, 2020, and February 13, 2021, were reported for an overall cumulative hospitalization rate of 0.6 per 100,000 population.
- 22.3% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia, influenza, or COVID-19.
- No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 6. A total of one influenza-associated pediatric death occurring during the 2020-2021 season has been reported to CDC.



Preventing influenza pandemics; [Nature](#)

Today's flu vaccines cannot prevent a devastating 1918-style pandemic. But influenza evolves so quickly that an annual vaccine may not even confer full protection against that season's strains. New advances are fueling a push for a long-lasting, broadly protective vaccine. These 'super-seasonal' vaccines could provide extended protection against non-pandemic flu strains for years on end — and could induce immunity to potential pandemic subtypes.



Development of vaccines for influenza disease: Opportunity costs of the COVID-19 pandemic; [Vaccine](#)

Cases of influenza reported by clinical and public health laboratories declined drastically in the United States from late March 2020 and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The combination of COVID-19, as well as heightened levels of influenza disease, would be devastating. The decades-old reliance on fallible vaccine technology in this area, the systematic defunding of public health over many decades in the United States, and the disruptive effects to vaccine research and development brought about by concomitant outbreaks of infectious diseases, suggests that greater policy emphasis should be placed on the funding and testing of novel vaccine technologies for influenza.



US flu hospitalizations at historic low amid COVID-19 school lockdowns; [NY Post](#)

The flu season has been virtually nonexistent this season — with the lowest rate of hospitalization ever since that data has been tallied. With many schools closed, more school kids have been staying home during the global health crisis, which has likely helped in stopping the spread of influenza. However, flu could return with a vengeance come the fall of 2021 since people have not built immunity to influenza.



Russia reports world's first case of human infection with H5N8 bird flu; [Reuters](#)

Russia has registered the first case of a strain of bird flu virus named H5N8 being passed to humans from birds and has reported the matter to the World Health Organization (WHO). Other strains - H5N1, H7N9 and H9N2 - have been known to spread to humans. The majority of human bird flu infections have been associated with direct contact with infected live or dead poultry, though properly cooked food is considered to be safe. The vast majority of cases are spread by migrating wild birds.



The Pandemic Broke the Flu; [The Atlantic](#)

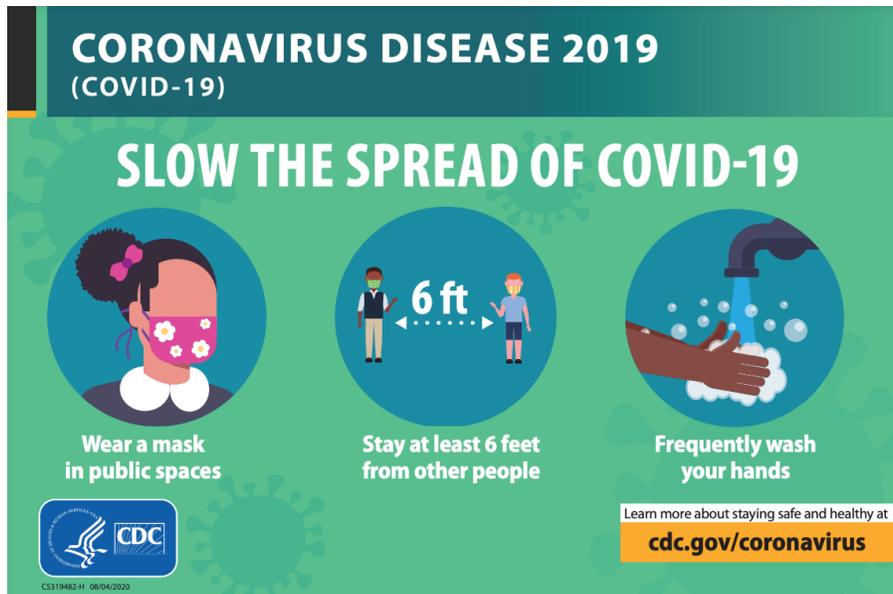
This winter has been an extraordinarily quiet flu season, but scientists aren't sure the silence will last. Without flu cases to study, researchers have been starved of data crucial for developing vaccines and forecasting the next outbreak. Flu viruses haven't gone extinct. They're temporarily in hiding. And no one's quite sure when, or how, they will return.

The next outbreak is inevitable. Its timing, however, isn't. If gatherings remain sparse, this year's glancing blow with the flu might repeat itself this time next year. Or the flu and its comrades could resurge in the coming weeks and months.

Updates & Announcements

Operating schools during COVID-19: CDC's Considerations

As communities in the United States consider how to safely re-open K-12 school buildings for in-person learning and activities and keep them open, CDC offers updated considerations for mitigation strategies that school administrators can use to help protect students, teachers, and staff and slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Find the considerations [here](#).



NEW Educational Comic Books

Families Fighting Flu, in collaboration with **Sanofi Pasteur** and the **National Association for Pediatric Nurse Practitioners** is excited to announce two new flu educational materials. These comic books that feature our family stories are available for immediate download to learn about [flu in children](#) and [flu in adolescents](#).



2 Protects 2 Educational Program Increases Awareness of Maternal Vaccines

[2 Protects 2](#) is a collaborative educational program between Families Fighting Flu and the **Partnership for Maternal and Child Health of Northern New Jersey** aimed at increasing public awareness about the importance of influenza (flu) and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccinations for pregnant women, especially among African American and Latina populations. Download and share our educational materials and social media graphics, available in both English and Spanish!



Social Media Graphics for Immediate Download

Looking to promote flu awareness on your social media channels? Check out our suite of social media graphics on general flu prevention, flu complications, COVID-19, and more [here](#)! Immediately download any of our graphics for use on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

An infographic with a light purple background. The text is arranged in a vertical stack: 'LAST SEASON, THE CDC' in small teal letters, 'ESTIMATES FLU CAUSED AT LEAST' in small teal letters, '38 MILLION ILLNESSES' in large blue letters, '400,000' in very large purple letters, 'HOSPITALIZATIONS' in large white letters, and '22,000 DEATHS' in large blue letters. To the right of the text is the logo for 'FAMILIES FIGHTING FLU, INC.', which consists of a stylized family icon (two adults and two children) above the text 'FAMILIES' and 'FIGHTING FLU, INC.' in a smaller font.

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FAMILIES
FIGHTING FLU, INC.

***Insights on Influenza* Blog Highlights Key Information**

Our blog features a variety of flu-related topics, such as flu news & surveillance, science & research, expert commentary, and advocacy. We publish a new blog every two weeks so bookmark this [webpage](#) to stay up to date!



Families Fighting Flu's Spanish Translated Resources

Take advantage of our new Spanish educational materials! Visit our website to view and download our [Spanish educational materials](#) today.



Become a Flu Champion

Do you want to make a difference in your community? Are you interested in flu education and advocacy? Become a [Flu Champion](#) to help inform others about the seriousness of flu and the importance of flu prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.



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