

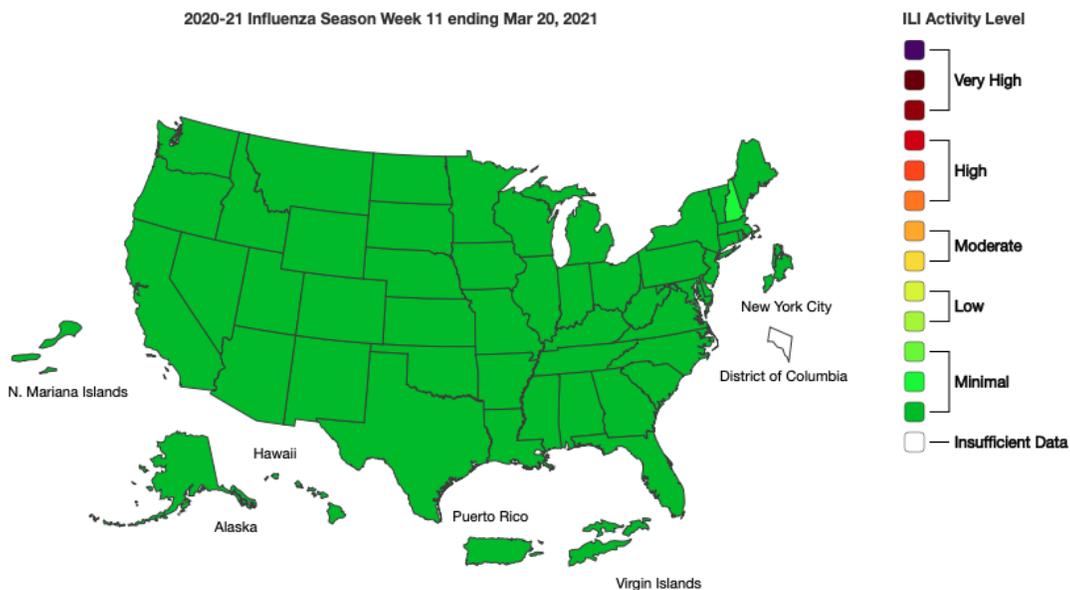


Weekly Flu News



CDC: Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report - Week 11 ending March 20, 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.
- 0.9% of visits to a health care provider were for influenza-like illness (ILI). ILI remains below the national baseline of 2.6%.
- Current cumulative hospitalization rate is 0.7 per 100,000 population.
- 12.1% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia, influenza, or COVID-19.
- No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 10. A total of one influenza-associated pediatric death occurring during the 2020-2021 season has been reported to CDC.





The pandemic dramatically reduced flu cases. That could backfire.; [POLITICO](#)

Public health experts are relieved that the United States avoided a “twindemic” of a strong flu season amid a spiraling Covid-19 outbreak. But the low levels of flu have left experts with a much smaller pool of data used for predicting which flu strains will predominate next winter. Dr. Paul Offit said that the low levels of the virus this season still yielded enough circulation for the FDA advisory committee to pick strains for a vaccine and that he is not worried about the vaccine for next fall. “The belief is that there was enough circulating virus to be able to pick what is likely to be the strains that are associated with next year’s flu outbreak,” Offit said.



Clinical Effectiveness and Safety of Antivirals for Influenza in Pregnancy; [Open Forum Infectious Diseases](#)

Early initiation of antiviral treatment of influenza has been shown to reduce the risk of complications and duration of illness. Pregnant and post-partum women may be at increased risk for influenza-associated complications, however pregnant women have been generally excluded from clinical trials of antiviral treatment of influenza. In this review, we summarize the available evidence on the clinical effectiveness and safety of antiviral treatment of pregnant women with influenza. Observational data show a reduction of severe outcomes when pregnant and postpartum women are treated with oseltamivir and other neuraminidase inhibitors without increased risk of adverse maternal, fetal or neonatal outcomes.



People Gave Up on Flu Pandemic Measures a Century Ago when They Tired of Them—and Paid a Price; [Scientific American](#)

Like COVID-19, the 1918 influenza pandemic hit hard and fast, going from a handful of reported cases in a few cities to a nationwide outbreak within a few weeks. Many communities issued several rounds of various closure orders – corresponding to the ebbs and flows of their epidemics – in an attempt to keep the disease in check. These

social-distancing orders worked to reduce cases and deaths. Just as today, however, they often proved difficult to maintain. By the late autumn, just weeks after the social-distancing orders went into effect, the pandemic seemed to be coming to an end as the number of new infections declined. Officials had warned the nation that cases and deaths likely would continue for months to come. The burden of public health, however, now rested not on policy but rather on individual responsibility. Predictably, the pandemic wore on, stretching into a third deadly wave that lasted through the spring of 1919, with a fourth wave hitting in the winter of 1920.



Nanoparticle flu shot blocks seasonal and pandemic strains; [UW Medicine](#)

Researchers have developed experimental flu shots that protect animals from a wide variety of seasonal and pandemic influenza strains. The vaccine product is currently being advanced toward clinical testing. If proven safe and effective, these next-generation influenza vaccines may replace current seasonal options by providing protection against many more strains that current vaccines do not adequately cover. To create improved influenza vaccines, the team attached hemagglutinin proteins from four different influenza viruses to custom-made protein nanoparticles. This approach enabled an unprecedented level of control over the molecular configuration of the resulting vaccine and yielded an improved immune response compared to conventional flu shots.



Cell-Based Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine Found Effective and Delivers Economic Benefits; [Precision Vaccinations](#)

New Jersey-based Seqirus USA Inc. announced the publication of new real-world evidence (RWE) on the company's cell-based quadrivalent seasonal influenza vaccine (QIVc) in the journal *Vaccines*. This retrospective cohort analysis indicated QIVc was more effective in reducing hospitalizations/emergency room (ER) visits caused by influenza, respiratory-related hospitalizations/ER visits, and all-cause hospitalizations compared with an egg-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVe) among individuals 4–64 years of age during the 2018 - 2019 U.S. flu season. In an economic analysis, the study also found that QIVc was associated with significantly lower annualized all-cause total costs ((\$461 savings); $p < 0.05$) per vaccinated subject, compared with QIVe.



Moderna to create dual COVID-19, flu vaccine, CEO says; [FOX News](#)

Moderna, the maker of the second COVID-19 vaccine to see emergency use approval in the U.S., is now looking to create a dual vaccine against the flu and the novel virus, the company's chief executive recently said. Moderna CEO Stephane Bancel said Tuesday that such a jab could be ready for use in a couple of years, though it would be subject to standard regulatory approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), not emergency use as its existing coronavirus vaccine was, he said during The Wall Street Journal Health Forum. "Today the vaccines we have for seasonal flu are OK in a great year and they are pretty bad in a bad year, in terms of efficacy," he said during the forum, per the Journal. "It is not impossible that in a couple of years we should have the product I just talked about — a high efficacy seasonal flu vaccine and a COVID vaccine — for you at your pharmacy on an annual basis."

Updates & Announcements

New Patient Video: Flu Survivor Shares Story to Help Others Understand Flu is Serious

We're highlighting another new patient video in our blog, *Insights on Influenza*. [Shari Hall](#) is a survivor of a life-threatening case of influenza. Shari and her daughter Elizabeth sat down with Families Fighting Flu to talk about their experience, including the challenges Shari faces after losing her leg and several fingers due to complications with the flu.



New Guest Blog Post from InFLUencer Dr. Cory

Learn strategies for discussing flu vaccination with hesitant parents from Families Fighting Flu medical advisor, [Dr. Cory](#). Dr. Matthew Cory is a practicing pediatrician in Lakeland, Florida. He received Board Certification by the American Board of Pediatrics, and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics.



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I've seen in my own practices that a parent may decline a flu vaccination at first pass, and then come back in after having the time and resources to change their mind.

Dr. Matthew J. Cory
FFF Medical Advisor



Looking for Ways to Get Involved?

There are many ways to get involved with the Families Fighting Flu organization. You can promote flu awareness, fundraise, distribute educational materials, and even get your kids involved! Check out some ways to engage [here](#) and consider becoming a [Flu Champion](#) in your community!



Get vaccinated!
It's the best way
to prevent the flu.



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Promote Maternal Vaccinations for Flu and Tdap

Flu and whooping cough present serious potential risks to pregnant women and infants. Help educate others about the importance of maternal immunizations using our [new educational materials and social media assets](#), which are available in English and Spanish.



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