

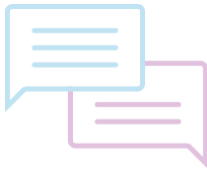


FAMILIES

FIGHTING FLU, INC.®

WEEKLY FLU NEWS

February 24, 2020



Join our Facebook group: Flu Fighting Forum

Want to learn more about flu? Join our new group that is focused solely on flu education and advocacy: [Flu Fighting Forum](#). This group, run by Families Fighting Flu, is a place for conversations about flu prevention, burden, and activity while offering opportunities for flu education and advocacy.



CDC: Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report: Week 7, Ending Feb. 15, 2020

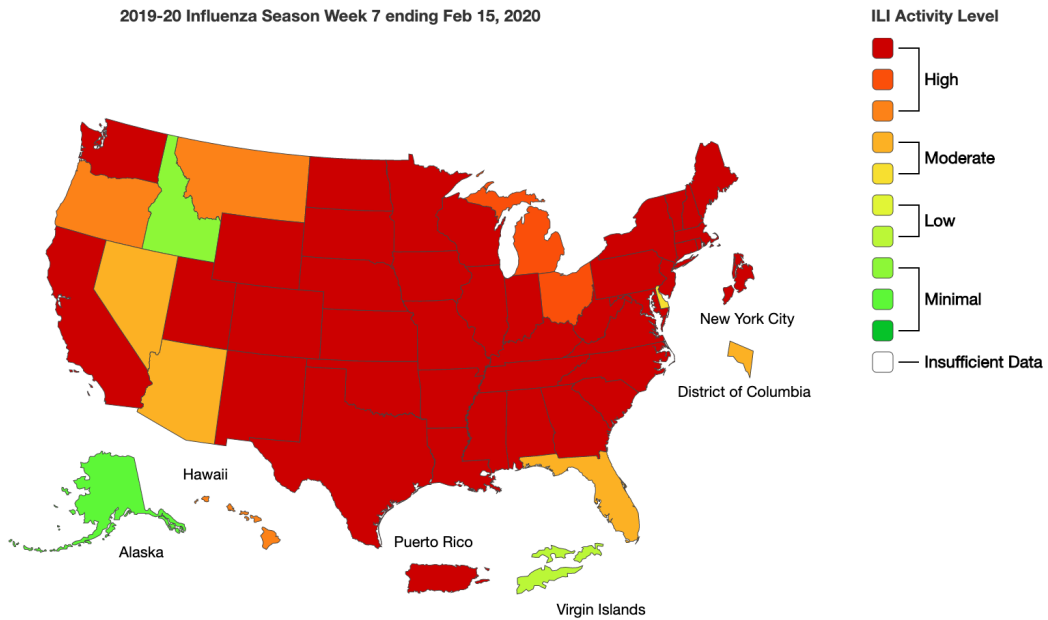
Feb. 21, 2020; [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

- Key indicators that track flu activity remain high but decreased slightly this week. Indicators that track overall severity (hospitalizations and deaths) are not high at this point in the season.
- 29.6% of specimens from clinical laboratories tested positive for influenza.
- Nationally, influenza B/Victoria viruses and H1N1 viruses are most common this season. There have been continued increases in H1N1 viruses in recent weeks. Predominant viruses vary by region and age group.
- 6.1% of visits to a health care provider were for influenza-like illness. All 10 regions remain above their baselines.
- The overall hospitalization rate is 47.4 per 100,000, which is similar to past seasons at this time.
- 6.8% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia and influenza, which is below the epidemic threshold.
- Thirteen new pediatric flu deaths were reported for the 2019-2020 season during week 7. The total for the season is 105. At this point in the season, this is the highest number of pediatric deaths since 2004, excluding the 2009 pandemic.

Week Ending Feb 15, 2020 - Week 7



2019-20 Influenza Season Week 7 ending Feb 15, 2020



2019-2020 U.S. Flu Season: Preliminary Burden Estimates

Feb. 21, 2020, [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)

CDC estimates that, from October 1, 2019, through February 15, 2020, there have been:

- 29 - 41 million flu illnesses
- 13 - 19 million flu medical visits
- 280,000 - 500,000 flu hospitalizations
- 16,000 - 41,000 flu deaths



Interim Estimates of 2019–20 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness

Feb. 20, 2020; [CDC MMWR](#)

According to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu vaccination across all age groups is reducing flu-related doctor's visits by almost half (45%) for circulating flu strains influenza B/Victoria and influenza A H1N1.

To date for this season, 105 influenza-associated deaths have been reported in children and adolescents aged <18 years; other than the 2009 pandemic, this is the largest number reported for this time of the season since reporting began for the 2004–05 influenza season.

These interim estimates indicating a 45% reduction in influenza illness associated with a medical visit so far this season are particularly important in the context of the substantial prevalence of influenza in the United States: during the previous decade, influenza caused an estimated 4.3–21 million doctor visits, 140,000–810,000 hospitalizations, and 12,000–61,000 deaths each year.



Everything you need to help fight the flu

Feb. 20, 2020; [CNN](#)

Face masks, sanitizers and other preventive products, while having marginal benefits, have nothing on the flu vaccine. Simply put, don't underestimate the value of a flu shot.

"Masks only provide marginal benefit," Adalja says. The issue, however, is that "most people do not wear them properly," rendering the product pretty much useless. Adalja, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security's senior scholar, recommends that health care professionals who might come in contact with infected persons, and who can ensure they are wearing the masks correctly, should opt for these.

Adalja says meticulous hand hygiene is a powerful method to prevent the spread of the virus. And since antibacterial soaps haven't been proven to be any more effective than just regular soap and water, one way to ensure you're killing those germs on your hands is to carry around an effective hand sanitizer. The CDC recommends alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content if you don't have immediate access to soap and water.



New coronavirus spreads more like flu than SARS: Chinese study

Feb. 19, 2020; [Reuters](#)

Scientists in China who studied nose and throat swabs from 18 patients infected with the new coronavirus say it behaves much more like influenza than other closely related viruses, suggesting it may spread even more easily than previously believed.

The researchers said their findings add to reports that the virus can be transmitted early in the course of the infection, and suggest that controlling the virus will require an approach different from what worked with SARS, which primarily involved controlling its spread in a hospital setting.

Additionally, this is a good reminder to follow similar precautions for flu and coronavirus, including handwashing, staying home when sick, and sanitizing hard surfaces where viruses can live.



What to Know as Flu Season Nears Peak

Feb. 21, 2020; [Healthline](#)

Separating myth from fact as flu season nears peak can help improve health outcomes.

Coronavirus vs. flu:

People have been on edge about the new coronavirus, but in reality, your chances of contracting the flu and experiencing life-threatening complications are much higher. To put this into perspective, few people in the United States have been diagnosed with the coronavirus, COVID-19 — none of whom have died.

It's not too late to vaccinate:

You may think the window to get vaccinated is closed, but you've still got time. The flu can often trickle into late spring — to May, even June — so if you get vaccinated now, you'll be protected for the next few months. Getting vaccinated is still the best protection we have against the flu. And when you get vaccinated, you protect not only yourself, but those around you — especially those with a higher risk of experiencing complications.



More than 100 children have died from the flu so far this season

Feb. 21, 2020; [The Hill](#)

At least 105 children have died from the flu so far this season as influenza rates among children and young adults are higher at this time than in recent years, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

That is the highest rate of child flu deaths at this point in the season since the CDC began keeping records in 2004, with exception for the 2009 flu pandemic, according to the CDC.

The CDC estimates that so far this season, there have been at least 29 million flu illnesses, 280,000 hospitalizations and 16,000 deaths from flu. Overall, hospitalization rates have been similar to other seasons, but rates among children are higher.

Despite a “Double-Barreled” Flu Season, the Vaccine is Mostly Doing its Job

Feb. 21, 2020; [Scientific American](#)



Despite a weird flu season, this year's flu shot is working relatively well to prevent influenza, particularly among children, according to a new report.

In the new report, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated the flu shot's effectiveness in more than 4,000 U.S. children and adults who visited the doctor for respiratory illness between Oct. 23, 2019, and Jan. 25, 2020.

Overall, the vaccine was 45% effective, meaning it reduced the risk of a doctor's visit for flu by 45%, the report found. The vaccine worked even better in children, reducing their risk of a doctor's visit for flu by 55%.



Seqirus Receives FDA Approval for FLUAD® QUADRIVALENT (Influenza Vaccine, Adjuvanted) for Adults 65 Years and Older

Feb. 24, 2020; PRNewswire

Seqirus announced today that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the first adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine, FLUAD® QUADRIVALENT (Influenza Vaccine, Adjuvanted), to help protect adults 65 years and older against seasonal influenza.

"Adults 65 years and older are at high risk for influenza-related complications each season and it is important to have influenza vaccines to help protect this vulnerable population," said Anjana Narain, Executive Vice President and General Manager at Seqirus. "As part of our leading role on the front line of influenza prevention, we are pleased to offer FLUAD QUADRIVALENT as another seasonal vaccine option for healthcare providers and their patients in the fight against influenza."



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