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WEEKLY FLU NEWS

January 20, 2020

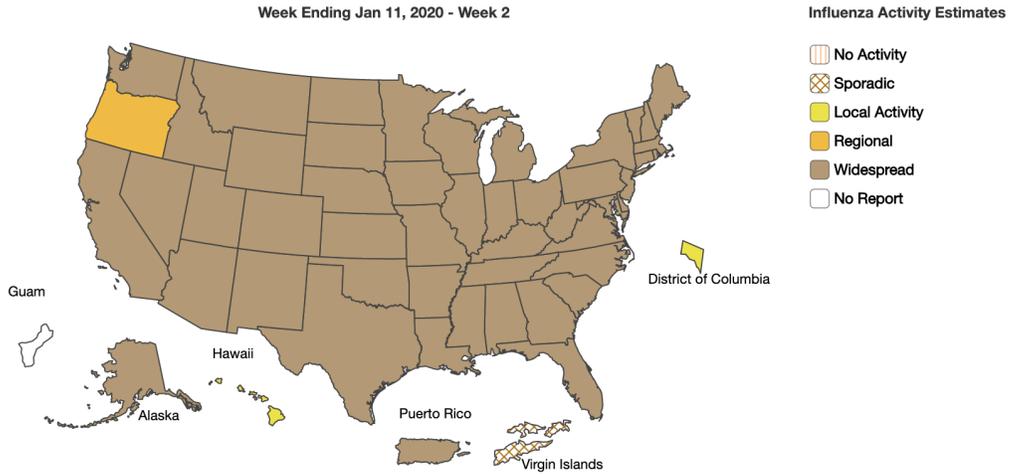


CDC: Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report: Week 2, Ending Jan. 11, 2019

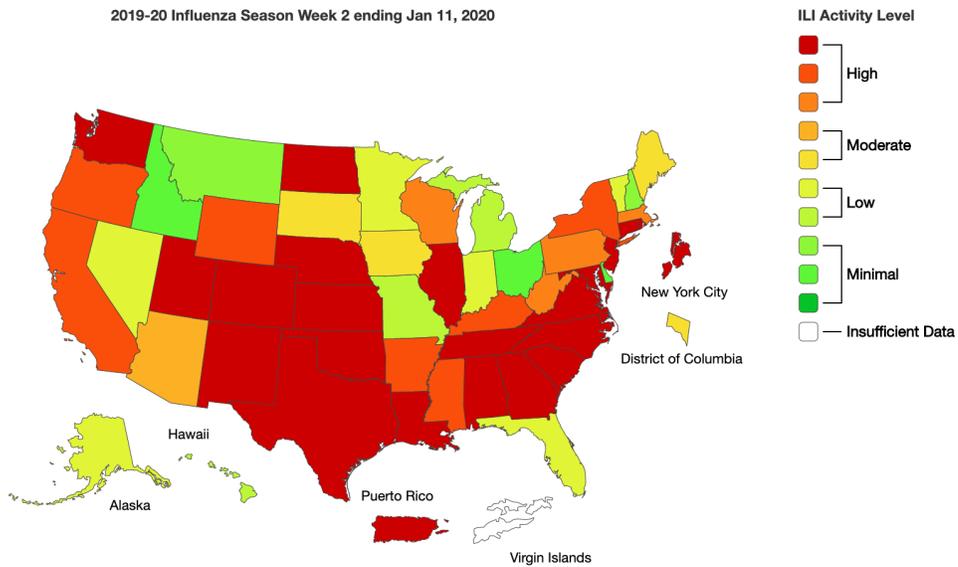
Jan. 17, 2020; [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

- Seasonal flu activity in the United States is high and continues to increase. Flu activity has been elevated for ten weeks.
- 22.9% of specimens from clinical laboratories tested positive for influenza.
- Nationally, influenza B/Victoria viruses are most common, though there is approximately equal circulation of H1N1 and B/Victoria viruses. Predominant viruses vary by region and age group.
- 4.7% of visits to a health care provider were for influenza-like illness. All 10 regions were above their baselines and continuing to increase.
- The overall hospitalization rate is 19.9 per 100,000, which is similar to past seasons at this time.
- 6.9% of deaths were attributed to pneumonia and influenza, which is below the epidemic threshold.
- Seven new pediatric flu deaths were reported for the 2019-2020 season during week 2. The total for the season is 39.

Week Ending Jan 11, 2020 - Week 2



2019-20 Influenza Season Week 2 ending Jan 11, 2020



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

Jan. 17, 2020, [CDC](#)

CDC estimates that, from October 1, 2019, through January 11, 2020, there have been:

- 13 million - 18 million flu illnesses
- 5.9 - 8.5 million flu medical visits
- 120,00 - 210,000 flu hospitalizations
- 6,600 - 17,00 flu deaths



This Year's Flu Shot May Not Be as Effective Against One Common Strain—Here's What That Means

Jan. 14, 2020; [Health](#)

According to the newest updated stats from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there's just a 58% match with B/Victoria viruses—aka, one of the most common viruses out there right now, representing almost 98% of circulating influenza B strains. Luckily, this year's flu vaccine is a 100% match with H1N1, which has accounted for about 82% of the influenza A out there.

All is not lost, of course, and there's no reason to get down about the vaccine. Even if you or your children do catch the flu, you're more likely to get a milder case that you can bounce back faster from, with the flu shot in your system. Because a 58% match is way better than nothing.



Millennials least likely to get a flu shot, and anti-vax beliefs may play a role

Jan. 16, 2020; [NBC News](#)

One of the age groups most likely to be sidelined by the flu this season is also the least likely to get flu shots: millennials. 61 percent of millennials familiar with the anti-vaccination movement said they agreed with at least some of those beliefs.

Overwhelming evidence shows that vaccination — including the flu shot — is safe. And all major medical groups urge nearly everyone over age six months to get the yearly flu vaccine.



Novavax Rises on Fast Track Designation to Influenza Vaccine

Jan. 15, 2019; [Associated Press](#)

The FDA granted Novavax a fast track approval for its seasonal influenza vaccine candidate NanoFlu for adult patients aged 65 years and above. “The FDA’s decision to grant Fast Track Designation for NanoFlu reflects the urgent unmet medical need for a more effective vaccine against influenza, particularly in the older adult population which often experiences serious and sometimes life-threatening complications, of the disease,” said Stanley C. Erck, President and Chief Executive Officer of Novavax.

Nanoflu is a recombinant vaccine, and therefore it is not grown in eggs. This process may help create a vaccine that more closely matches circulating flu viruses and produce greater immunity against flu in people aged 65+.



The U.S. is near full employment. Get ready for a bad flu season

Jan. 15, 2020; [CBS News](#)

Unfortunately, as the unemployment rate decreases, flu infection increases.

Because the U.S. is close to full employment, workplaces are more crowded, allowing the flu virus to spread more easily, according to an economist. In fact, each 1-percentage point increase in the employment rate correlates with a 16% bump in flu-related doctors' visits.

"Our study suggests that companies should be cognizant that if someone comes to work when sick, even if it saves the company in one aspect, it might cost them money in another area, in that someone who comes to work sick could get other people sick," study author Erik Nesson says.



Flu Taking a Toll, Pediatric Deaths Hit 17-Year High

Jan. 11, 2020; [Healthline](#)

The United States may be gearing up for one of the worst flu seasons in years, health experts predict.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported Friday that there have been 32 pediatric deaths so far this season. That's the most flu-related deaths we've seen in children since the CDC started tracking flu numbers 17 years ago.

That's the most flu-related deaths we've seen at this point in the season in years, though that's largely due to the earlier start we got this year. (To put this into perspective, at this time last year, there had only been 16 pediatric deaths.)



Parents Reportedly Don't Take the Flu Seriously Enough—and it Could Be Hurting Their Children

Jan. 16, 2020; [Health](#)

Over the last decade, an average of 140,000 to 810,000 people have been hospitalized annually due to complications from the flu—and a whopping 12,000 to 61,000 people per year lost their lives to the infectious disease. And yet, despite those staggering statistics, people of all ages are still not taking the flu seriously enough—and it's putting their health (and the health of their families) at risk.

That information comes from a new national survey conducted by the American Academy of Family Physicians. The survey, published Thursday (right smack-dab in the middle of flu season) polled 1,000 nationally-representative US adults ages 25-73 to determine the impact flu myths and misconceptions have on vaccination rates.



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