

Influenza Key Points

October 14, 2011

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Summary Key Messages

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the initial "FluView" influenza activity report for the U.S. 2011-2012 flu season with the message that flu activity is currently low, making this the perfect time to get vaccinated.
- The first FluView report indicates that influenza activity in the United States is low now, however, increases in influenza activity are expected in the next few weeks as flu season gets underway.
- The first FluView report also indicates that so far circulating viruses are very well matched to the viruses the vaccine, so it's looking like we will have a vaccine that provides good protection this season to help keep influenza illness and serious complications down.
- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for the body's immune response to fully kick in.
- It's best to get vaccinated before activity begins so that you'll be protected once flu season starts in your community.
- CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine.
- More than 110 million doses of vaccine had been delivered in the United States as of the end of September, with manufacturers projecting total production of between 166 and 173 million doses.
- This is the most flu vaccine ever produced for the U.S. market.
- This season, people have more options than ever in this regard, both in terms of where they get vaccinated and which vaccine they chose to get.
- While doctor's offices and health departments continue to provide flu vaccinations, vaccine also is available at many pharmacies, work places and other retail and clinic locations.
- In addition to the traditional seasonal flu shot that has been available for decades, a nasal spray vaccine was introduced in 2003 for non-pregnant healthy people between 2 and 49 years of age, and a high dose flu shot was introduced last season for people 65 and older.
- Also, new for this season is an intradermal shot, which uses a needle 90% smaller than the regular flu shot and is approved for people 18 to 64 years of age.

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First FluView Activity Report

- Each week, CDC receives reports from international, state and local participants and within 48 hours compiles and analyzes that data to produce a report that provides comprehensive situational awareness regarding influenza activity in the United States.
- The CDC FluView Report is published each Friday from October through mid-May and appears at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm>.
- Following is a more detailed summary of the report for the week of October 2 to 8, 2011.
 - Visits to doctors for influenza-like illness (ILI) were low nationally, with all 10 U.S. regions reporting ILI below region-specific baseline levels.
 - No states reported widespread, regional or local influenza activity. Sporadic influenza activity was reported by 20 states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Twenty-nine states and Guam reported no influenza activity. One state did not report.
 - The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) based on the 122 Cities Report was below what is expected for this time of year.
 - No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported this week, but one pediatric death has occurred during the summer weeks of the 2010-11 season, and was associated with an influenza B virus.
 - Nationally, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza was 1.2%.
 - Influenza viruses identified so far include 2009 H1N1 viruses, influenza A (H3N2) viruses and influenza B viruses. Overall, these viruses remain similar to the viruses chosen for the 2011-2012 flu vaccine, and remain susceptible to the [antiviral drugs](#) oseltamivir and zanamivir.