

Public Health Points

York City Bureau of Health

Volume 30, Issue 6

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December 2014

www.yorkcity.org

FLU SEASON UNDERWAY IN YORK

As in many past years, the initial upsurge in influenza (flu) in York usually appears between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. So it was no surprise that during the week of December 15-21 the first cases of laboratory-confirmed flu in York City residents, fourteen of them, were reported to the York City Bureau of Health. Furthermore, flu cases have been reported elsewhere in the state and the nation for a number of weeks beforehand. Conclusion so far – We're off to a timely and strong start to this 2014-2015 flu season.

Many persons who get flu symptoms during the winter months will self-treat with rest, fluids, and over-the-counter medications that relieve their most prominent symptoms. Some will seek medical care, perhaps they will be tested for flu and perhaps they will receive a prescription for an anti-viral medication. Since only persons with a positive laboratory test for flu are officially counted as flu cases by public health departments, it is obvious that the total number of flu cases is significantly undercounted.

The best way to avoid getting the flu is to get a flu vaccination. Flu vaccine supply is more than adequate to meet the demand. Persons wanting the vaccine have numerous places in the community to go to get their flu shot – medical care provider offices, pharmacies, some supermarkets, and even some job worksites, to mention a few.

Flu vaccine effectiveness is always a concern from year to year. This year the vaccine's A(H3N2) strain does not appear to be well matched to the circulating A(H3N2) strain causing illness. Nevertheless, the other vaccine strains do appear to be effective and will undoubtedly protect a large number of people from getting the flu. Getting the flu vaccine still appears to be a smart choice.

Flu vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older. Groups at increased risk for complications of the flu include: adults 50 years of age and older, children 6 months to 4 years of age, residents of long-term care facilities, persons under 18 years of age receiving chronic aspirin

therapy (usually for juvenile rheumatoid arthritis), and pregnant women. It is especially important for pregnant women to get the flu vaccine to help prevent severe illness and pregnancy-related complications that can result from flu. Another high priority group to get the flu vaccine each year is healthcare workers.

In addition, persons with certain medical conditions are particularly at high risk from complications of the flu and should get an annual flu vaccination. Those individuals include persons with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, weakened immune system, diabetes, liver disease, kidney disease, neurologic or neuromuscular disease, and morbid obesity (BMI \geq 40).

Persons who are interested in tracking this year's flu season can get up-to-date data and information from several reliable websites. Pennsylvania data are available on www.health.state.pa.us/flu. National data can be found at www.cdc.gov/flu.

Reportable Conditions 2014 York, PA

Reported Cases	Nov. 2014	Cum.
Animal Bites	7	110
Campylobacter Enteritis	1	6
Chlamydia	41	542
Gonorrhea	18	126
Hepatitis B	0	4
Hepatitis C	3	76
HIV Infection	2	13
Influenza Type A	0	46
Influenza Type B	0	15
Influenza, Not Specified	0	1
Invasive Group A Beta-Strep Disease	0	2
Legionellosis	0	1
Lyme Disease	1	8
Malaria	0	1
Meningitis – Aseptic	1	1
Meningitis – Fungal	0	1
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection	5	43
Salmonellosis	1	2
Tuberculosis	0	1
Varicella	0	3
Total Case Reports	80	1002

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!

**Free Flu Shots for
Uninsured and Medicaid
6 Months to 18 Years of Age**

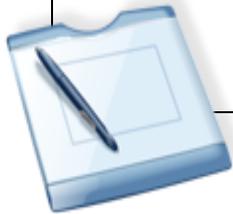
**Where: York City Bureau of Health
Albert S. Weyer Health Center
435 W. Philadelphia St.**

**Contact: York City Bureau of Health
at 815-0910**

**Medical Care Providers
Sign-Up for PA HAN
(Health Alert Network)**

**Email Notification On Urgent Topics
of Public Health Importance to
Physicians and Medical Practices**

**Contact: <https://han.pa.gov>
to register**



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