

Information Regarding Influenza

This year flu stats date ending 12/28/18, lab confirmed cases:

CENTRE COUNTY	Type A: 50	Type B: 27	Total: 77
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***These are county-wide numbers. The Bellefonte community has not been affected any more than in previous years.

While more than 100 different viruses can cause a cold, only influenza virus types A, B, and C cause the flu.

Type A and B viruses cause the large seasonal outbreaks. Type C usually causes milder respiratory symptoms. While the flu vaccine can help protect you from types A and B, there is no immunization for type C virus.

The flu is highly contagious. It spreads when you come into contact with the stuff someone else sneezes or coughs up.

You could breathe it in, or get it from kissing. You could get it on your hands from objects like silverware, doorknobs, handles, television remotes, computer keyboards, and telephones.

The virus enters your body when you touch your hands to your nose, eyes, or mouth.

The CDC recommends that flu "vaccine should continue to be offered to unvaccinated people throughout the flu season as long as vaccine is still available." They also state that "as long as flu viruses are spreading, it's not too late to get a vaccine to protect

yourself and your loved ones." Please contact your primary doctor for information about getting a flu shot.

The best ways to avoid the flu are to wash your hands frequently. If you are not able to wash your hands use alcohol based sanitizer. Also, get a flu shot. It is helpful to avoid sick persons. A priority for yourself would be to stay healthy by getting adequate rest, eating right, and exercising. It is also important to keep your surroundings clean.

Please also try to remember that when you are sick you should stay home from work and school and seek medical treatment for severe flu cases. If your doctor prescribes medicine take it for the length and dose prescribed. It is also advisable to rest and increase your fluid intake. OTC pain medications such as Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen can help with any aches and pains associated with the flu, but an antibiotic will not help the flu, it is a viral illness.

For more information the cdc has a lot of information on their website at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm>

Flu Symptoms

Influenza (also known as flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Flu is different from a cold. Flu usually comes on suddenly. People who are sick with flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever* or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

**It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.*

Flu Complications

Most people who get flu will recover in a few days to less than two weeks, but some people will develop complications (such as pneumonia) as a result of flu, some of which can be life-threatening and result in death.

Sinus and ear infections are examples of moderate complications from flu, while pneumonia is a serious flu complication that can result from either influenza virus infection alone or from co-infection of flu virus and bacteria. Other possible serious complications triggered by flu can include inflammation of the heart (myocarditis), brain (encephalitis) or muscle (myositis, rhabdomyolysis) tissues, and multi-organ failure (for example, respiratory and kidney failure). Flu virus infection of the respiratory tract can trigger an extreme inflammatory response in the body and can lead to [sepsis](#), the body's life-threatening response to infection. Flu also can make chronic medical problems worse. For example, people with [asthma](#) may experience asthma attacks while they have flu, and people with [chronic heart disease](#) may experience a worsening of this condition triggered by flu.

People at High Risk from Flu

Anyone can get sick with flu (even healthy people), and serious problems related to flu can happen at any age, but [some people are at high risk of developing serious flu-related complications](#) if they get sick. This includes people 65 years and older, people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), pregnant women and children younger than 5 years, but especially those younger than 2 years old.

What are the emergency warning signs of flu sickness?

In children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms that improve but then return with fever and worse cough

In addition to the signs above, get medical help right away for any **infant** who has any of these signs:

- Being unable to eat
- Has trouble breathing
- Has no tears when crying
- Significantly fewer wet diapers than normal