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Seasonal Flu Activity Remains High Nationally

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): National Data

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has classified the 2024-2025 influenza (flu) season as **high severity** for all age groups (children, adults, and older adults) for the first time in seven years.

The CDC rates flu severity as **low**, **moderate**, **high** and **very high** based on three key indicators:

1. Percentage of influenza-like illness (ILI) (symptoms of fever and cough or sore throat) visits to outpatient clinics;
2. Rates of flu-related hospitalizations;
3. Percentage of deaths resulting from the flu.

All three of these key indicators are rated nationally as **high** severity. The CDC estimates there have been at least 37 million illnesses, 480,000 hospitalizations, 21,000 adult deaths, and 98 pediatric deaths from flu so far this season.

The CDC publishes weekly reports that discuss national influenza trends. Two of these reports are:

1. [FluView](#): weekly influenza surveillance report.
2. [Weekly US Map: Summary Update](#): weekly summary surveillance report that tracks influenza-like illnesses (ILI) in the United States.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH): Local Data

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) publishes [weekly influenza updates](#) every Thursday that displays an overview of influenza severity, flu activity trends, current flu activity, lab testing, and deaths due to influenza in Massachusetts.

The MDPH uses the same severity indicators as the CDC, rating Massachusetts influenza severity as **high**. In Massachusetts, hospitalizations associated with influenza are elevated at 6.13% of all hospitalizations, and there have been 242 adult deaths and 7 pediatric deaths this season.

Neurological Complications from the Flu in the Pediatric Population

On February 14th, the MDPH published a [Clinical Advisory](#) discussing neurological complications of influenza in pediatric patients. Recently, Massachusetts healthcare providers have noted a possible increase in the number of pediatric influenza cases with neurological complications in comparison to previous seasons. Similar possible increases have been observed nationally. This could be because flu rates are high this season, resulting in higher rates of neurological complications simply

because there is more flu circulating. This could also be because the circulating flu type(s) cause higher risk.

On February 27th, the CDC published an [article](#) in their weekly Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) confirming the information published in MDPH's Clinical Advisory. The CDC is working closely with state Health Departments to track influenza-associated neurological complications in children.

The Best Defense Against the Flu for Children and Adults: Get Vaccinated!

Receiving the annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to help reduce the risk of getting the flu and any of its potentially serious complications. Flu vaccination has shown to reduce the risk of getting the flu, reduce the severity of illness of the flu, and flu-related death.

The Bedford Health Department has flu vaccines available for all ages! Please call the Health Department at 781-275-6507 or email BOH@bedfordma.gov to schedule an appointment today!

