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February 27, 2020

Flu Widespread

# Flu 'widespread' throughout New York; peak not hit

Essex, Clinton counties mark 10 plus cases per 100,000

BY **KIM DEDAM**

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**ELIZABETHTOWN** | Incidence of flu this season is widespread throughout New York, including Essex County.

Susan Lopez Allott, R.N., M.S., is director of the Essex County Public Health Preventive Services. Allott said every county in New York State has greater than or equal to 10 cases per 100,000 population.

"We get reports of flu on a daily basis," Allott told the Sun.

"The number of flu cases is very high. What is different this flu season is the proportion of Influenza B to Influenza A. We had Influenza B occur earlier in the season."

Allott provided the most recent data gathered by state Department of Health officials.

It shows that influenza activity level was categorized as geographically "widespread" for the 11th consecutive week, a condition much the same throughout the U.S., except for "moderate" flu cases in Nevada and Oregon; "low" in the District of Columbia, Alaska and Florida; and minimal in Idaho.

In Essex County, of 12 cases of flu reported last week, eight are Influenza B and four are Influenza A.

In Clinton County, of 66 cases of flu reported last week, 51 are Influenza B and 15 are Influenza A.

The latest influenza surveillance report showed 17,233 laboratory-confirmed flu cases reported to the State Department of Health (DOH), the second-highest weekly total since the 1998-1999 flu season.

There have been a total of 106,824 lab-confirmed cases reported in New York State this season, with three flu-related pediatric deaths.

And 1,993 patients across New York were hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed influenza last week, a 1% increase from the week prior.

Allott said prevention is key to keeping flu at bay.

And prevention involves several important, though relatively straight forward, steps:



**Influenza B virus under an electron microscope.**

*Photo from U.S. Centers for Disease Control*

# INFLUENZA (FLU) Flu and You

Everyday health habits to protect your health and the health of others:



Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your arm when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.



Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.



Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth because germs spread this way.



If you are sick with flu-like symptoms, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone.\*

*\* Your fever should be gone without using fever-reducing medicine. Staying at home means that you should not leave your house except to get medical care. Stay away from others as much as possible so you don't make them sick.*

Photo from U.S. Centers for Disease Control

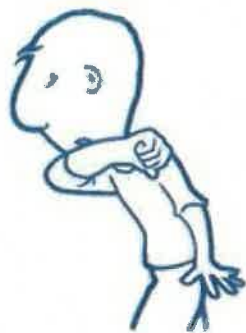
# INFLUENZA (FLU) Flu and You

How do you know if you have the flu?

Signs of the flu can include:



Fever



Cough



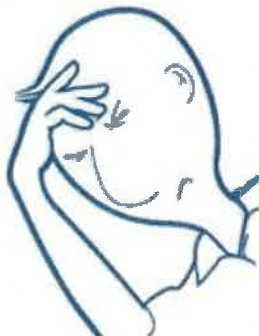
Sore throat



Runny or stuffy nose



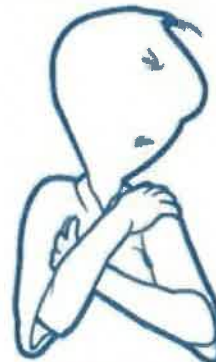
Feeling weak or more tired than usual



Headache



Chills



Body aches

Photo from U.S. Centers for Disease Control

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Stay home when you are sick.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

And don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth, because that is how the virus spreads.

In addition, Allott said, people age 65 and over should get the pneumonia vaccine.

Incubation influenza exposure is two days, but can range from one to four days, Allott said of contagion before symptoms present.

Flu season occurs primarily from October through May.


"We're not seeing that we've reached the peak yet," she said.

Information about influenza symptoms and prevention is online at Essex County Department of Health:

<https://www.co.essex.ny.us/Health/communicable-disease-control/flu-central/>

DOH updates its flu tracker online each week:

<https://nyshc.health.ny.gov/web/nyapd/new-york-state-flu-tracker> ■

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BY [KIM DEDAM](#) FEBRUARY 27, 2020 3:00 PM

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