

Dept. of Health Services: Confirms three pediatric influenza-associated deaths

Posted on Thursday, Mar 17, 2022

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Public health officials urge prevention, remind Wisconsinites it is not too late to get the flu shot to prevent serious illness

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has confirmed the deaths of three children under the age of 18 due to complications from [influenza](#). These are the first reported pediatric influenza-associated deaths in Wisconsin for the 2021-2022 season.

“DHS is deeply saddened to report these flu deaths in Wisconsin this influenza season,” said State Health Officer Paula Tran. “It is important to remember that along with COVID-19, other communicable diseases such as flu are circulating in our communities. Each of these alone can pose serious health risks for children, and co-infection can occur. It is not too late for Wisconsinites to get vaccinated to protect themselves and others.”

With the number of flu cases and hospital admissions rising throughout the state, DHS encourages Wisconsinites to get vaccinated. The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent severe illness associated with the influenza virus. Everyone over 6 months of age is recommended to get the flu vaccine. Specifically, it is highly recommended for people who are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill, such as those who are pregnant, over age 65, and those with chronic health conditions. DHS recommends Wisconsinites talk with a health care provider if they have questions about the flu or getting vaccinated. It is never too late to get a flu shot.

As COVID-19 continues to circulate across Wisconsin, staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines also remains critical. You can get your flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time. [Vaccine finder\(link is external\)](#) is a free tool that can help Wisconsinites find a vaccine provider near them.

In addition to getting vaccinated, taking everyday actions to stop the spread of germs can help prevent the flu and other respiratory illnesses:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Stay home and away from others if you feel sick.
- Avoid being around others who are sick or have flu symptoms.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze and encourage children to do the same.

Up-to-date information on the current flu season can be found in the [DHS Weekly Respiratory Report](#).