



## CONTACT

**Dustin Boothe**  
**Epidemiologist**  
Carson City Health & Human Services  
(Office) 775-283-7220  
(Email) [dboothe@carson.org](mailto:dboothe@carson.org)

January 5, 2018  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **CARSON CITY/DOUGLAS COUNTY/LYON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIP NEWS RELEASE**

### **HEALTH ALERT: Significant Increase in Flu Activity – Vaccine Still Available**

*Carson City/Douglas County/Lyon County, Nev.* – Carson City Health and Human Services (CCHHS) is reporting a significant increase of positive Influenza (flu) cases in the region. Overall, Carson City, Douglas and Lyon Counties have experienced many more cases of influenza this year than the same time last year. In fact, reports of illness and hospitalizations are in some cases twice that of this time last year. The healthcare system (hospitals, clinics, and EMS) is working very hard to meet the demand for services.

Flu activity most often peaks in February and can last into May. It remains to be seen if we will have an early peak this year, or if things will continue to get worse. The strain of influenza circulating is primarily the Type A, H3N2, which usually causes more severe illness, with increased hospitalizations and deaths, especially for young children and older adults.

#### How does the flu spread?

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Flu viruses also may spread when people touch something with flu virus on it and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Many other viruses spread these ways too. Persons infected with flu may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick. That means you may be able to spread the flu to someone else before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick. Young children, those who are severely ill, and those who have severely weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for longer than 5-7 days.

#### How do I know if I have the flu?

The flu usually comes on suddenly. People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms: fever or chills, coughing, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, and fatigue. Sometimes people with the flu can have vomiting and diarrhea, although this is more common in children than adults. If you or someone you know is sick with some of these symptoms they should consider getting medical attention, especially if they are at high risk of complications. People at high risk of complications include children under five years-old, adults 65 years-old or older, and pregnant women.

#### What about the vaccine?

There is plenty of it with more than 148.2 million doses having been distributed in the United States. There are no shortages – see your healthcare provider, one of the clinics listed below, or pharmacy. The bad news is:

- 3 out of every 5 members of the general population are unprotected, with Nevada having the lowest rates in the nation.



## CONTACT

**Dustin Boothe**

**Epidemiologist**

Carson City Health & Human Services

(Office) 775-283-7220

(Email) [dboothe@carson.org](mailto:dboothe@carson.org)

- For pregnant females, the rate is 35.6%. They are at higher risk of complications, especially in the second and third trimester, as are their newborns, who cannot be vaccinated until 6 months of age.
- The effectiveness of the vaccine is lower this year, estimated to be 32% against the H3N2 strain, but could be as low as 10%. The average effectiveness between 2006-2017 is 46% (as low as 19% in 2014-15, with a high of 60% in 2010-11.)

However, getting vaccinated is still the single most important and effective measure one can take to prevent illness, hospitalization, or death from influenza!

### What about antiviral medication, such as Tamiflu?

If you get the flu, there are prescription antiviral drugs that can treat your illness. Early treatment is especially important for the elderly, the very young, people with certain chronic health conditions, and pregnant women.

### What are everyday preventive actions?

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with flu-like illness, we recommend that you (or your child) stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

It is not too late to get your flu shot! Vaccination is still the best protection against the flu and your individual flu shot serves as your contribution to community wellness. It will help protect the elderly and all babies under 6 months old who are too young to be vaccinated, as well as the vulnerable in our community with cancer, respiratory illnesses, and weakened or compromised immune systems. Your efforts help build Community Immunity!

### The flu shot is available at:

#### **Carson City Health and Human Services**

900 East Long Street, Carson City, Nevada, 89706

Walk-in immunizations are available every

Thursday from 8:30am-11:30am and 1pm-4:30pm

We bill Medicaid, Medicare and most private insurances, or \$20 without insurance. Flu vaccinations are a covered benefit under most insurance plans.



**CONTACT**

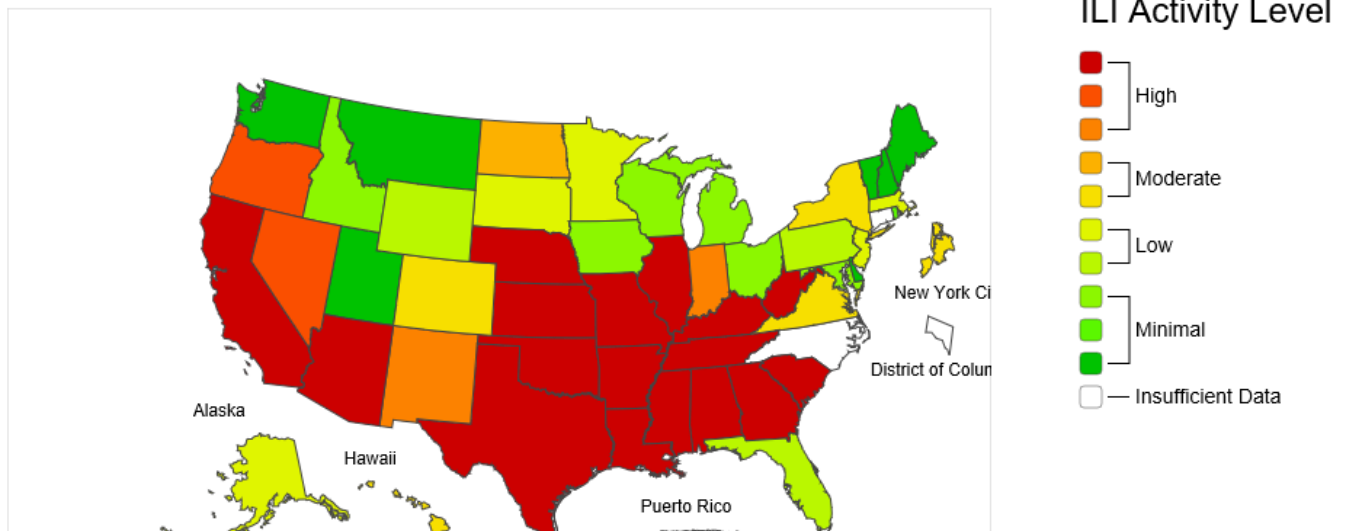
**Dustin Boothe**  
**Epidemiologist**  
 Carson City Health & Human Services  
 (Office) 775-283-7220  
 (Email) [dboothe@carson.org](mailto:dboothe@carson.org)

**Douglas County Community Health**  
 1329 Waterloo Lane, Gardnerville, NV, 89410  
 Walk-in immunizations are available every Monday from 1:00-4:00pm.  
 Call (775) 782-9038 for more information.

**South Lyon Medical Center**  
 213 S Whitacre Street, Yerington, NV 89447  
 Call (775) 463-6494 or (775) 463-6424



**2017-18 Influenza Season Week 51 ending Dec 23, 2017**



\*This map uses the proportion of outpatient visits to healthcare providers for influenza-like illness to measure the ILI activity level within a state. It does not, however, measure the extent of geographic spread of flu within a state. Therefore, outbreaks occurring in a single city could cause the state to display high activity levels.  
 \*Data collected in ILINet may disproportionately represent certain populations within a state, and therefore may not accurately depict the full picture of influenza activity for the whole state.  
 \*Data displayed in this map are based on data collected in ILINet, whereas the State and Territorial flu activity map are based on reports from state and territorial epidemiologists. The data presented in this map is preliminary and may change as more data is received.  
 \*Differences in the data presented by CDC and state health departments likely represent differing levels of data completeness with data presented by the state likely being the more complete.  
 \*For the data download you can use Activity Level for the number and Activity Level Label for the text description.

You can contact us at (775) 887-2190 or [CCHHSinfo@carson.org](mailto:CCHHSinfo@carson.org) for additional information.

#####