

Nebraska Influenza Prevention Fact Sheet

For more information:
<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/flu/>

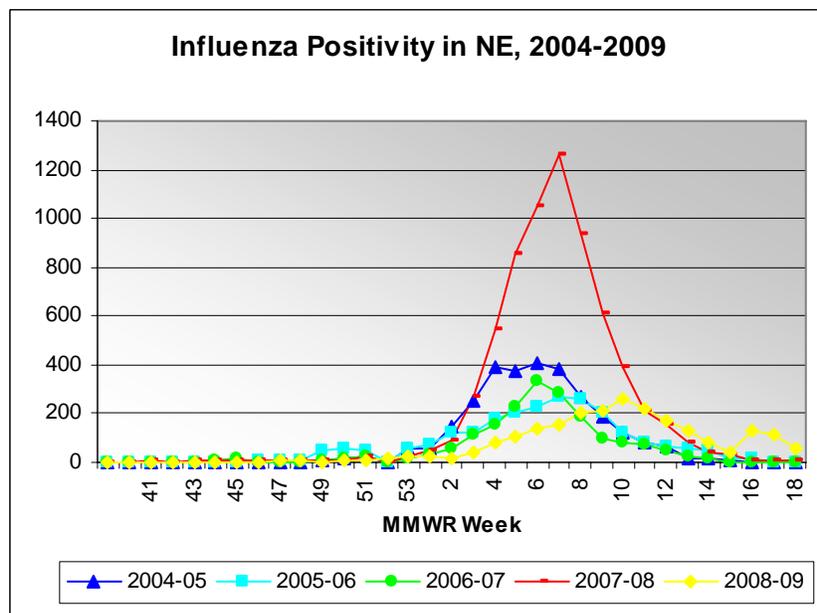
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Division of Public Health



Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a **VIRUS**. Every year in the United States, on average 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and; about 36,000 people die from flu. Symptoms include: fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, also can occur but are more common in children than adults. The infection usually lasts for about a week. Someone suffering from influenza can be infectious from the day before they develop symptoms until seven days afterwards.

According to Nebraska surveillance data, influenza typically remains at low levels at the beginning of October through late December. Activity increases at the end of December and reaches its peak between late January and early March. At the end of the influenza season in April, activity decreases and remains at a low level. The 2007-2008 flu season was the most severe in the last four years, partly due to lack of effectiveness of the vaccine.



Tips for Flu Prevention

The single best way to prevent seasonal influenza is to GET VACCINATED.

Additional ways to help prevent influenza include:

1. **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick, or with others if you are sick.
2. **Stay home when you are sick.**
3. **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
4. **Clean your hands frequently.**
5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**
6. **Practice other good health habits**, such as getting plenty of sleep, being physically active, managing your stress, drinking plenty of fluids, and eating nutritious food, etc.

