

# The Flu Will be Here Next Week – and It Can Kill You



By Julianna LeMieux — November 17, 2017



Flu masks [1]

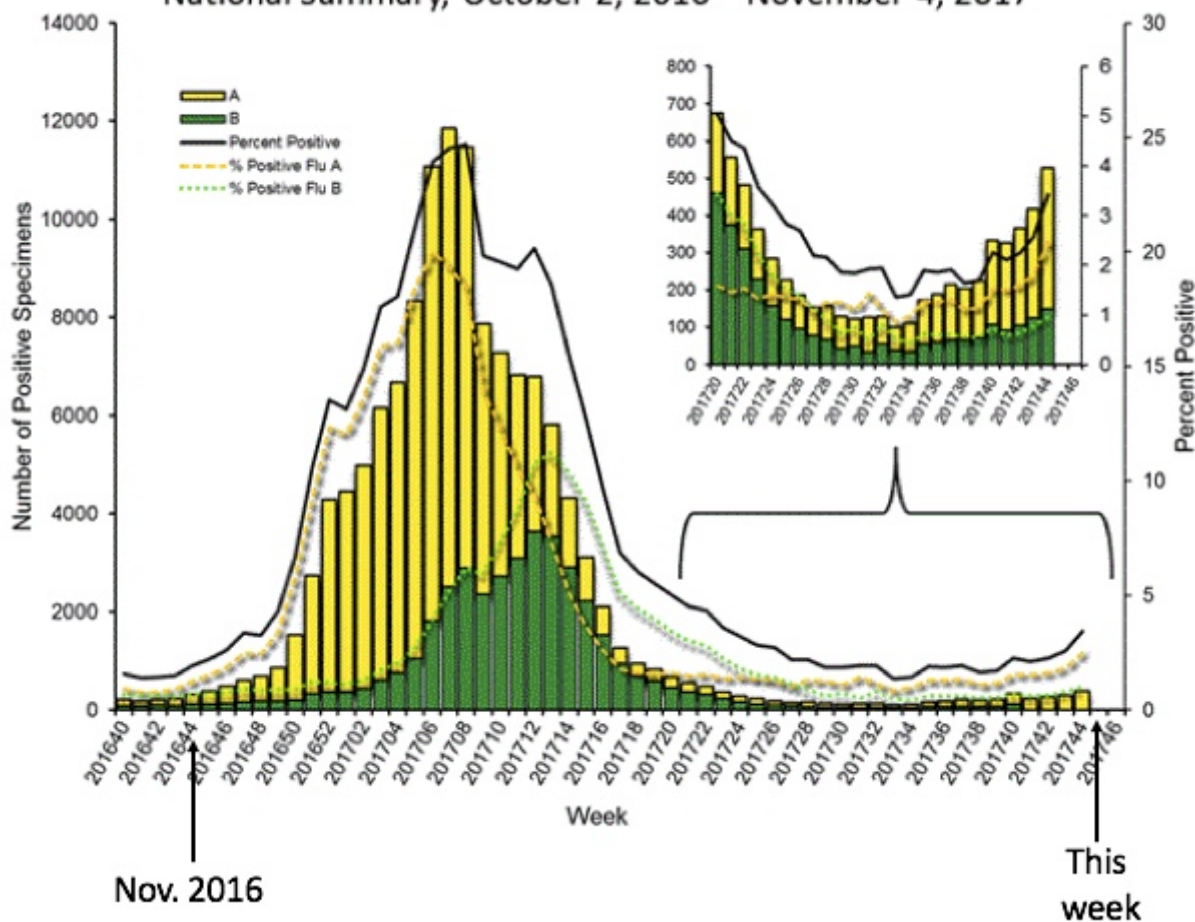
It's the middle of November and it's time to move "get a flu shot" straight up to the top of the to-do list if you haven't already. There is no more procrastinating.

Why? Because it is coming - and fast. In order to see just how soon we will be walloped by flu cases, take a look at the graph below which shows the number of positive influenza tests reported to the CDC starting in October, 2016. Each bar represents one week. The different colors, which are less important, represent which strain was identified. What is easily seen is that the number of positive cases started to climb in the fall of 2016 - just around the first week of November. And, the cases climbed steadily until they peaked in February and March, coming back down again until there were almost none over the summer. But, if you look at the end of the graph, and in even more detail in the insert that is blown up in the upper right portion of the graph, the line is beginning its predicted rise again this year.

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## Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC by U.S. Clinical Laboratories, National Summary, October 2, 2016 – November 4, 2017



What this tells us is that the flu is coming - like, tomorrow. And, you don't want to wait until it is here. Upon vaccination, the immune system has to go through several different steps in order to produce protective antibodies - all of which take time. It takes, on average, one to two weeks to develop full immunity. Since the amount of protection from the flu depends on the amount of antibodies circulating in the body, it is important to have those antibodies ready and waiting before you come into contact with your co-worker who cannot stop coughing.

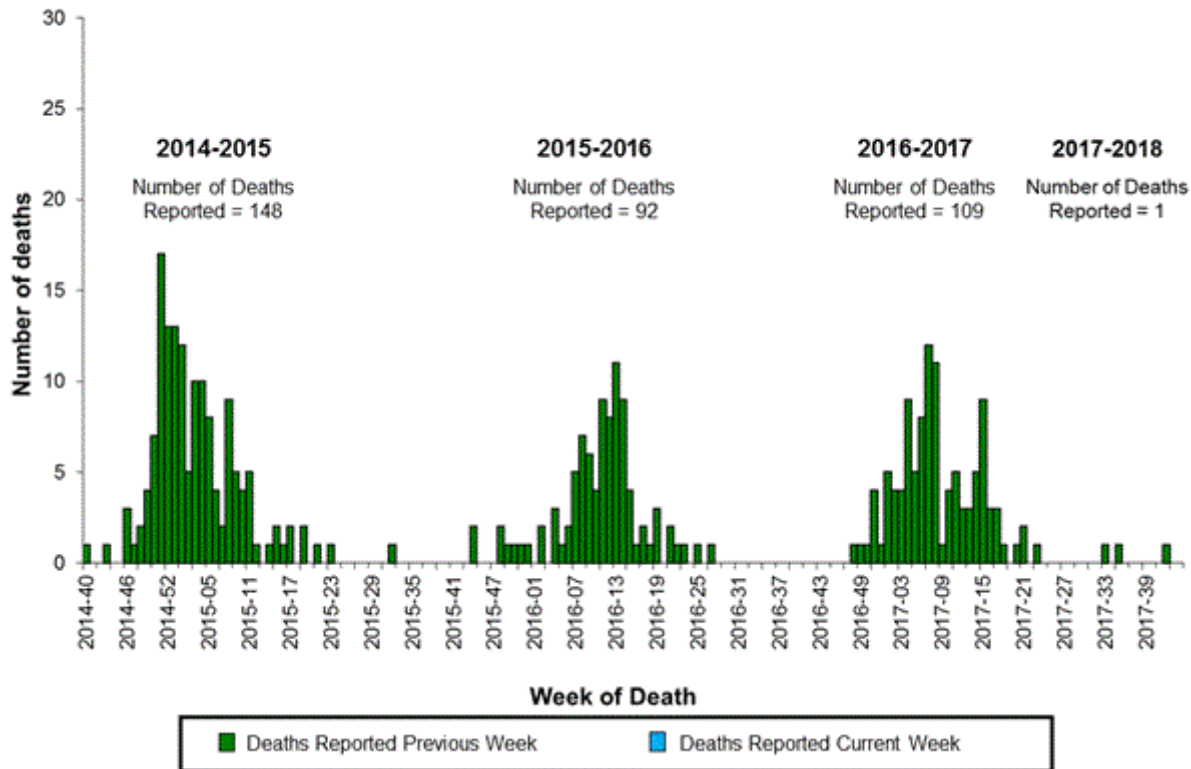
In addition, there are predictions that the strain is bad this year, based on what has been seen circulating around the world. Tragically, a toddler's death in California last week reminds us of just how virulent the flu can be. And, he won't be alone. There are somewhere around 100 pediatric deaths a year from the flu. (1) Last year, it was 109 children. The year before that 92 children and in 2014/2015, it was 148 children. Young children (under 5) are at an increased risk of serious flu complications and most of those serious cases (~90%) occur in children who are unvaccinated.

So, please do not waste any more time. The flu will be here next week and it's time to protect yourself. If you don't, for God's sake, please vaccinate your children.

### Notes:

(1)

## Number of Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths by Week of Death: 2014-2015 season to present



References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/children.htm> [2]

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**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/11/17/flu-will-be-here-next-week-%E2%80%93C2%A0and-it-can-kill-you-12141>

**Links**

[1]

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Flu%20mask&title=Special%3ASearch&go=Go&se>

[2] <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/children.htm>