

INFLUENZA ACTIVITY UPDATE

From Drs. Williams and Petit

On Monday, December 3, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released information to the media concerning U.S. influenza activity and vaccination rates.

Highlights:

- This is the earliest regular flu season we've had in nearly a decade, since the 2003-2004 flu season. That was an early and severe flu year, and while flu is always unpredictable, the early nature of the cases as well as the specific strains we're seeing suggest that this could be a bad flu year.
- The sub type that we're seeing in most of the people with flu this year, is the same sub type as 2003-2004 and it's a sub type called H3N2 that's generally associated with more severe flu seasons.
- We've seen high levels of activity in southern states as we often see at the start of the flu season, the predominant organism is H3N2 which can be associated with more severe flu season.
- The match of this year's flu vaccine is an excellent match with the flu circulating.
- The only thing we know for certain, besides unpredictability is that getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself.

We still have flu vaccine available and we urge you to get the flu vaccine as soon as possible. Please call the office for an appointment for your child and/or yourself.