



# Ministry of Health & Human Services

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## MHHS Reports Increase in Influenza (Flu) Cases seen at Belau National Hospital

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The Ministry of Health and Human Services (MHHS) would like to inform the public that a steep increase in the flu has been observed at the Belau National Hospital. Laboratory testing has confirmed influenza B virus in at least 28 patients since May 28. So far children and adolescents aged 15 years and below account for majority of cases. Everyone is advised to take necessary precautions to protect family members.

### What is influenza?

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza virus that is spread via coughs, sneezes, and physical contact with somebody who has influenza. Illness is typically mild, but can severe in higher risk groups which include, the elderly, children, and those with immune-compromised health conditions.

### What are the symptoms of the flu?

People with the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Sore throat
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Cough
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Headaches
- Vomiting & Diarrhea (common in children)

### How to prevent influenza

The best thing you can do to prevent becoming infected or spreading the flu includes getting your annual flu vaccine when it is available. During flu outbreaks, wash your hands often to avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth as these are common pathways for viruses to enter your body. When possible, avoid contact with sick people. If you are sick, stay home and wear a mask when around others.

### When to seek medical care

You should seek medical attention from a healthcare provider if you experience difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, pain/pressure in the chest or abdomen, or severe/persistent vomiting.

If you or your family member is very concerned, please contact your doctor or the Belau National Hospital OPD (488-2555) or ER (488-2558) for instructions. For emergencies, call 911.

For more information about influenza, please refer to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html>