



Ministry of Health & Human Services

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MHHS Reports Influenza (Flu) Outbreak

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The Ministry of Health & 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 A virus in at least 38 patients since June 28. So far children and adolescents account for the majority of cases. Everyone is advised to take necessary precautions to protect family members, especially as the new school year commences.

What is influenza?

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that is spread via coughs, sneezes, and physical contact with somebody who has influenza. Illness is typically mild, but can be severe in higher risk groups which include, the elderly, children, and those with immuno-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
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

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 and 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 the 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>