

Flu Bug Hits US Hard and Fast

The flu season is off to an early start. The World Health Organization reports more people have been infected in recent weeks than at the worst point last year.

In some cases, even those who have gotten the flu shot are getting sick. Consequently, hospitals across the country are being hit hard with an influx of patients.

"They ache all over and they have fever. They're congested; they have coughs. There are a lot of people who have these same symptoms we see all throughout the day and all throughout the night," Dr. Ryan Radecki of Memorial Hermann's ER, said.

Doctors say the flu season hasn't hit this hard and fast in a decade, as shown by the following statistics:

- This time last year in Arizona, there were only 18 cases of flu. Today there are 790.
- In New York, there were 84 cases last year. Today, there are almost 4,000.

Officials say it's best to treat yourself at home if possible. As the number of cases increase, emergency rooms are becoming overwhelmed.

"Not only is it flu season, the ER is also handling all the other cases and everything else that comes into the ER on an annual basis." Millie Lavaway, of Halifax Regional Hospital, said.

"Obviously the wait times have increased," Halifax Regional Hospital's Sherri Bee said.

The Southeast is being hit especially hard. But in the wake of a busy travel season, it's quickly spreading across the country.

Regarding those who got the flu shot and are still coming down with the flu, experts explained that some people don't respond to the vaccine, and some people just aren't fully protected.

Nevertheless, doctors say it's still important to get the shot because your symptoms may not be as severe if you've been vaccinated.

With the flu virus you're infectious a full day before you ever show any symptoms.

"I would urge everyone, not just for themselves, but for their friends, neighbors and relatives and their children to get vaccinated right away," Tim McDonald, of Snohomish County Hospitals, advised.

Experts say that, along with the flu shot, it's important to wash your hands and avoid large groups of people to avoid infection.

Doctors warn that seniors over the age of 65, children under the age of 5 and anyone considered immune-compromised are most at risk for developing a serious case of the flu.

[Click here for the original article at .](#)