

# FLUBYTES



March 20, 2009

Michigan Department of Community Health, 201 Townsend Street, Lansing, MI 48913  
For additional flu information visit: [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu)

## Latest Flu News

### **INFLUENZA COMPLICATIONS HAVE KILLED 26 U.S. CHILDREN DURING THE CURRENT INFLUENZA SEASON**

In the week ending March 7, 2009, the CDC received reports of five more U.S. children killed by complications from influenza; the season total now stands at 26. According to the CDC, of the 24 children who were tested for bacterial coinfections, 18 (75.0%) were positive; *Staphylococcus aureus* was identified in 12 (66.7%) of the 18 children. When the child's immune system is weakened from the flu, bacteria that the child may resist when healthy, are able to further sicken the child. This realization provides additional rationale for influenza immunization.

Annual vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting against influenza and its complications. It is important to continue vaccinating into the spring months. For more information about annual vaccination visit Michigan's Influenza web page at: [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu) or the CDC influenza web page at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

### **ENGINEERING FLU VACCINES: NEW METHOD COULD IMPROVE VACCINES**

A new computerized method of testing could help world health officials better identify flu vaccines that are effective against multiple strains of the disease. Rice University scientists who created the method say tests of data from bird flu and seasonal flu outbreaks suggest their method can better gauge the efficacy of proposed vaccines than can tests used today. For more information, click [here](#).

## Other News

### **MICHIGAN'S STRATEGIC NATIONAL STOCKPILE PLAN ONE OF BEST IN NATION**

Michigan's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) plan recently received a 99 percent from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), proving that the state remains a public health preparedness leader. The CDC annually evaluates Michigan's readiness to deploy the SNS, which is a large quantity of medicine and medical supplies strategically located across the country to protect the American public. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Flu Surveillance Update

Flu activity throughout Michigan decreased slightly but remained at "regional" level for the week ending March 14, 2009. MDCH labs confirmed 37 influenza cases, bringing the season total to 240: 85 influenza Bs and 155 influenza As (147 A/H1N1s). Twenty-four influenza A/H1N1 viruses from Michigan have been tested for antiviral resistance at CDC for the 2008-2009 season. All 24 viruses were resistant to oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) and sensitive to zanamivir, amantadine and rimantadine.

For additional surveillance information, the MI Flu Focus is [archived](#) and the most current edition is included in this email. To find out about influenza activity in the U.S., visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>

## Flu Resources

Access **Influenza Videos** from the Immunization Action Coalition's website by clicking [here](#). Personal and heart wrenching stories from families affected by influenza are available in the videos produced by the CDC and Families Fighting Flu.

Access the following links for additional resources:

Michigan's influenza web page: [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu)

- Seasonal, Pandemic and Avian influenza
- Flu Advisory Board
- Information for Healthcare professionals, community vaccinators, clinical laboratories, families, and businesses

Flu Fighter Action Kit for Health Care Personnel  
[www.michigan.gov/flufighterkit](http://www.michigan.gov/flufighterkit)

CDC influenza web page: [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

MDCH would like to extend an invite for any interested health care professional to become involved in the Flu Advisory Board (FAB). To join FAB, contact Liz Harton, CDC Public Health Advisor at [hartone@michigan.gov](mailto:hartone@michigan.gov).

FluBytes is distributed to MDCH flu partners for informational and communication purposes. Please feel free to distribute widely. An archived list of past FluBytes issues can be found [here](#).

After this issue, FluBytes will be distributed bi-weekly. Expect your next issue on April 3, 2009.