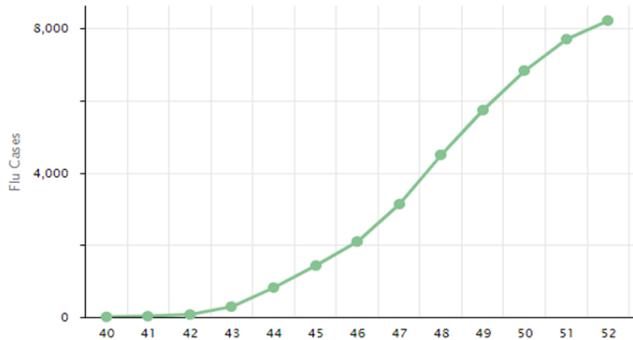


Total Flu Cases, 2022-2023 Flu Season, Delaware, Weeks 40-51 (October 2, 2022-December 31, 2022)



Source: <https://myhealthycommunity.dhss.delaware.gov/portals/flu/>

Delaware reports 8,529 total flu cases

Delaware had 8,529 total flu cases from October 2, 2022 through January 7, 2023, according to the Division of Public Health (DPH). Additionally, there have been 64 flu-related hospitalizations for the season, and three flu-related deaths.

New weekly flu cases declined from 790 during the week of December 18 to 516 between Christmas and New Year's Eve, and to 282 during the week of January 1.

DPH advises Delawareans 6 months of age and older to get their annual flu vaccine for protection against flu illness, hospitalization, and death. Visit flu.delaware.gov to find flu vaccine. For flu data, visit [My Healthy Community](https://myhealthycommunity.dhss.delaware.gov).

Pediatric invasive Group A streptococcal infections rose in fall of 2022

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a Health Advisory to notify clinicians and public health authorities that [pediatric invasive Group A streptococcal infections \(iGAS\)](#) increased between September to November, above what was seen in 2020 and 2021.

Seek immediate treatment for GAS illnesses including: pharyngitis ([strep throat](#)), [rheumatic fever](#), [streptococcal toxic shock syndrome](#), [necrotizing fasciitis](#), and skin and soft tissue infections (including [cellulitis](#)).



New XBB.1.5 variant causes 70% of new COVID-19 cases in the Northeast

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is closely watching the new [XBB.1.5 variant](#) that comprises greater than 70% of COVID-19 viruses in the Northeast. The first cases of XBB.1.5, which is believed to have originated in the U.S., were seen in Delaware in December.

XBB.1.5 is thought to be more transmissible but not more virulent and it is not causing more severe illness. The CDC says getting the bivalent booster is important as variants continue to circulate. It should provide some protection against transmission, but mostly against more serious illness and outcomes. Delawareans ages 5+ who received the primary COVID-19 vaccine series are eligible for the bivalent booster if they are fully vaccinated and have not had a booster since August. Visit de.gov/boosters.

As of January 11, 2023, 643,835 Delawareans are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, 94,958 are partially vaccinated, and 173,916 received their bivalent booster doses, according to the Division of Public Health (DPH). For more data, visit the [My Healthy Community](#) data portal, which is now updated every Wednesday to be consistent with the CDC's updated reporting structure. If there is a significant surge in cases, DPH will make more real-time data available.

December marked two years since the first patient in the United States received a COVID-19 vaccine. A recently published Commonwealth Fund study estimates that from December 2020 through November 2022, the U.S. COVID-19 vaccination program prevented more than 3.2 million additional deaths and 18.5 million additional hospitalizations. The modeling indicates that there would have been nearly 120 million more COVID-19 infections over that period and the vaccination program saved over \$1.15 trillion in medical costs that would have been incurred otherwise in the United States alone.



U.S. adolescent overdose deaths rise 109%

The potency of drugs was a major contributing factor in the 109% increase in the median monthly drug overdose deaths among U.S. youth ages 10 to 19 years (adolescents) between July to



December 2019 and July to December 2021, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC article, "[Drug Overdose Deaths Among Persons Aged 10-19 Years - United States, July 2019-December 2021](#)," was published in the December 16, 2022 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

The median monthly overdose deaths among U.S. adolescents involving illicitly manufactured fentanyl increased 182% from July to December 2019 to July to December 2021. During the same period, approximately 90% of U.S. adolescent overdose deaths involved opioids and 83.9% involved illicit manufactured fentanyl. According to the CDC, most youth who overdosed had no prior opioid use history. About 25% of the deaths included evidence of counterfeit pills. Approximately 41% of the youths who overdosed had a history of mental health treatment, diagnosed depression, or suicidal or self-harm behaviors.

The CDC urges parents to monitor adolescent behavior. DPH's Office of Health Crisis Response, and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health developed the toolkit, Talk2Kids About Drugs, which is available on [HelpsHereDE.com](https://helpshere.de.gov). The site also offers treatment and recovery resources for youth struggling with a mental health or substance use disorder. Crisis intervention services for children under 18 are available 24/7 for parents and caregivers at 800-969-4357 or by texting DE to 741741.

All ages can call the Delaware Hope Line at 1-833-9-HOPEDE for free 24/7 counseling, coaching, and support, plus links to mental health, addiction, and crisis services. To learn the warning signs of drug use and how to respond quickly to an overdose, register for a Narcan administration training at <https://www.helpsherede.com/overdose-prevention>.

Prepare for winter power outages

Those who prepare for winter power outages should be able to cope better. Follow this advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- [Make an emergency plan](#) that includes a disaster supply kit of water, dried and canned food, and emergency supplies to last at least three days.
- Use battery-operated lanterns instead of candles to reduce the chance of a fire.
- Install a battery-operated or battery back-up carbon monoxide (CO) detector and smoke detector in your home. Make sure the batteries are working. CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can kill you. To prevent [CO poisoning](#), only use generators, grills, and portable gas camp stoves outdoors. When generators are in use, they should be at least 20 feet away from the home. Never heat a home with a gas range or oven.
- Keep appliance thermometers in your refrigerator and freezer. The refrigerator should be at 40°F or below. The freezer should be at 0°F or below.
- [During an outage, keep refrigerators and freezers closed](#). If the power has been out for four hours, put refrigerated perishable foods (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) in a cooler with ice, frozen gel packs, or dry ice and keep it at 40°F or below. You can safely refreeze or cook thawed frozen food that still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below. ^{CDC} Discard refrigerated perishable foods after four hours without power with no added cold source and if the temperature in the refrigerator or cooler falls below 40°F. If the freezer doors stay closed, food will stay safe for up to 48 hours in a full freezer or 24 hours in a half-full freezer.
- Throw away refrigerated medication when the power is out for a day or more, unless the drug label says otherwise or if a life depends on it.
- Check with local authorities to be sure your water is safe. Bottled, boiled, or treated water is safe for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene.
- Wear layers of clothing to keep in body heat and keep extra blankets on hand to prevent [hypothermia](#), an abnormally low body temperature that is a medical emergency. Babies and older adults should not sleep in cold bedrooms.

