

Public Health Preparedness Newsletter | Fall 2025



Department of
Public Health
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

About This Newsletter

This newsletter was created by the Public Health Preparedness Program to better prepare residents for public health emergencies, such as severe storms, infectious diseases, and more.

This newsletter is available in **Amharic, Arabic, Dari, French, Haitian Creole, Indonesian, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Swahili, Vietnamese, and English** at bit.ly/CRPNnewsletter.

Request free printed copies.



bit.ly/PHPMaterials



Leave a message at 215-429-3016.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Respiratory illness information.

Vaccine and health guidance.

Utility assistance information.

Mental health and primary health care resources.

Don't Forget to Sign Up for ReadyPhiladelphia!

The Office of Emergency Management shares information about severe weather through free email and text alerts using the City's mass notification system, ReadyPhiladelphia.

Alerts are now available in **eleven languages**: English, French, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Swahili, and American Sign Language.

For free text alerts, please text **READYPHILA** to **888-777** or sign up at bit.ly/ReadyPhila.



Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones

Respiratory Illnesses

Respiratory illnesses are viruses that affect the respiratory system, such as the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs.

Who is at risk of serious illness?

- Adults aged 65 and older.
- Babies and children under 5 years old.
- People with weakened immune systems.
- People with disabilities.
- People with certain chronic health conditions.
- Pregnant people.

Symptoms of respiratory viruses include:

- Fever, chills, cough, runny nose, headache, fatigue, and more.

Seek medical attention or call 9-1-1 if you have:

- Trouble breathing, chest pain, dizziness, confusion, seizures, high fever, fever or cough that improves but returns or worsens.

How the Viruses Spread

- Respiratory viruses spread through the air, when an infected person sneezes, coughs, or talks and someone inhales particles of the virus from that person.
- Viruses can also be spread when you touch objects or surfaces with particles of the virus and then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Viruses can spread before an infected person begins to have symptoms, this is called asymptomatic spread.

Viruses tend to spread more in the fall and winter because:

- More people are gathering indoors due to cold weather.
- Travel and gatherings for the holidays.
- The colder, drier air helps viruses spread more easily.

Prepare for Respiratory Virus Season

Core prevention strategies



Immunizations



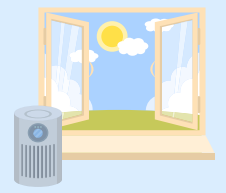
Hygiene



Treatment



Stay Home and Prevent Spread



Steps for Cleaner Air

Additional precautions to prevent illness



Masks



Tests

Use additional strategies when:

- ✓ Many people in your community are getting sick or are not vaccinated.
- ✓ You were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering.
- ✓ You, or those around you, are at risk of serious illness.



Vaccine and Health Guidance

Vaccination is the best **protection**.

Vaccines are the safest way to build immunity from a virus and lower your chance of serious illness.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the vaccines you need this season.

Flu Vaccine

- The flu vaccine is updated every year to protect against the strains or types of flu expected to be common or dangerous that year. Learn more at bit.ly/FluPHL.
- Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every year.

COVID-19 Vaccine

- Everyone 6 months and older are eligible for an updated COVID vaccine.
- It is especially important for a person to get a COVID-19 vaccination if they are:
 - Ages 65 and older
 - Pregnant, postpartum or lactating
 - At high risk for severe COVID-19 or in close contact with someone at high risk for severe COVID-19
 - Ages 6-23 months old or have never been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Learn more at www.phila.gov/COVID.

RSV Immunization

- All adults 75 years and older as well as adults 50 years and older who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease should receive a single dose of RSV vaccine.
- Infants less than 8 months whose birthing parent did not receive RSV vaccination should receive one dose of RSV monoclonal antibody in their first RSV season.
- Pregnant people should get the vaccine to prevent illness in infants.
- Learn more at bit.ly/RSVvaxPHL.

UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR COVID, FLU AND RSV

IF YOU ARE SICK

If you have symptoms, test immediately.

You can return to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours:

- Your symptoms are getting better overall **AND**
- You are fever-free without fever reducing medicine

When you return to your normal activities, take **additional precautions for the next 5 days**.

Consider testing before coming into contact with someone who has a high chance for serious respiratory illness, especially if you have symptoms.

IF YOU ARE EXPOSED TO A RESPIRATORY VIRUS

Monitor for symptoms and take additional precautions for 1-2 weeks.

Contact your healthcare provider for any questions, especially if you are at risk for serious illness.

If you test positive for a respiratory virus but do not have symptoms, take additional precautions for 5 days.

Protect Your Health

Respiratory Viruses

Prevent the spread!

- Stay up to date on vaccines.
- Stay home if you feel sick.
- If you have symptoms, test for COVID-19 and Flu with the Flowflex Plus combined test.
 - Visit bit.ly/COVIDResourceHubs for locations to get free tests and other items.

Find free or low-cost medical care, even if you do not have insurance.

- Visit phila.gov/primary-care

Questions? Call the Philadelphia Department of Public Health at **215-685-5488**.

- Press 2 for Spanish.
- Press 3 for interpretation in your language.
- Dial 711 for TRS/TTY assistance.

Utility and Housing Assistance

Stay safe at home this fall and winter.

Utility Emergency Services Fund (UESF)

Case management, financial assistance, educational workshops and more.

215-972-5170 - uesfacts.org

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA)

Warmline

PCA provides support and information during severe cold-weather emergencies.

215-765-9040

BenePhilly

Free, one-on-one support to apply for public benefits.

800-994-5537 - bit.ly/BenePhilly

Neighborhood Energy Centers

Information on how to save on utilities and help paying energy bills. Visit bit.ly/PHLNECs.

Mental Health Resources

- You are not alone.
- Reach out 24/7 (interpretation available).

National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

- Call or text 9-8-8

Mental Health and Substance Use Services

- 888-545-2600

Free online screening and resources

- HealthyMindsPhilly.org

More than 1 in 6 adults in Philadelphia has a diagnosed mental health condition.



Stay Connected

Visit our website.

 bit.ly/PDPHPreparednessOutreach

Request a resource table or training.

Contact us for copies of this newsletter, questions, or problems with the translation.



PublicHealthPreparedness@phila.gov



Leave a message at 215-429-3016.

Sign up for the Community Response Partner Network (CRPN).



bit.ly/phlcommunityresponse

Get essential public health information to share with family, friends, and neighbors.

