



Influenza Activity Spotlight

2012–2013 Season

Issue #8 — November 26, 2012

Reminder: Summit calls are now scheduled every Thursday at 3 p.m. ET, unless cancelled. The next call is scheduled for November 19. Please send an email to [L.J. Tan](#) or [LaDora Woods](#) if you have updates or activities to provide to the Summit.

1. **Summit Call** – There was no call on November 22 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.
2. **The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** for week 46, 2012 (ending November 17, 2012) is available [here](#). This site also includes maps of the ILINet State Activity level and the [geographic spread](#) of influenza illness as reported by state and territorial epidemiologists. This map indicates the geographic spread of influenza viruses but does not measure the intensity of influenza activity. CDC's seasonal influenza key points for November 16, 2012 are available [here](#). [Archives](#) of previous *FluViews* also are available.
3. **Information from CDC:**
 - As of November 16, 2012, no additional H3N2v cases have been reported to CDC since those reported on September 28, 2012. Information about the recent H3N2v outbreaks is available [here](#).
 - The [Spanish translation](#) of CDC's 2012-2013 seasonal influenza key points has been released.
 - Resources recently posted on CDC's [influenza website](#):
 - **Matte Articles**
 - ready for placement
 - general audience and audience-specific
 - Location:
 - * *Free Resources* - Print Materials, organized by audience
 - * *Free Resources* - National Influenza Vaccination Week
 - **Influenza Awareness Campaign Toolkit**
 - General audience and audience-specific
 - Location:
 - * *Free Resources* – National Influenza Vaccination Week (also to be posted within Information for Partners)
 - New resources have been posted on CDC's [NIVW website](#), including:
 - [2012–13 NIVW Update](#)

Please note the announcement within this document that mid-season coverage data will be posted [online](#) on the afternoon of December 3.
 - [NIVW Key Points](#) are now available.

- New [NIVW activities](#) have been posted. Click [here](#) to submit your own event.
- Please join CDC on the NIVW Twitter Chat (#NIVW2012), featuring Influenza Division Medical Officer Dr. Mike Jhung, on Wednesday, December 5, 1–2 PM ET.

4. **Novartis Vaccines Receives Approval for Cell-Culture Influenza Vaccine**

On November 20 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has granted approval of Novartis Vaccines' *Flucelvax*® (Influenza Virus Vaccine), a cell culture derived influenza virus vaccine. A [press release](#) describing this action is available.

5. **Summit Re-Launches the Influenza Vaccine Availability Tracking System (IVATS)**

In response to Hurricane Sandy and possible losses of seasonal influenza vaccine among vaccine providers, the [National Influenza Vaccine Summit](#) has re-opened IVATS (Influenza Vaccine Availability Tracking System). Click on *Looking for Influenza Vaccine for your Clinic* found in the lower right corner of the webpage. A direct link to the [PDF](#) also is available.

IVATS is a resource for physicians wishing to purchase influenza vaccine. The site contains information from approved, enrolled and participating wholesale vaccine distributors or manufacturers of US licensed influenza vaccine. This information will be updated throughout the 2012–2013 influenza vaccination season.

Please share this resource with any providers in your jurisdiction who may have questions about where to purchase influenza vaccine for the current influenza season. For questions about IVATS, please contact [Diane Peterson](#).

6. **Families Fighting Flu Will Hold an Educational Webinar on Thursday, November 29, at Noon ET**

Moms are so busy. But during flu season, taking the time to protect yourself and your family from this highly-contagious and serious disease can be life-saving.

As a mom or mom-to-be, it's important to stay informed and to always be prepared. To help, *Families Fighting Flu* (FFF) invites you to join an educational webinar to learn about protection from influenza for pregnant women, new moms, including those who are breastfeeding, and young children. Dr. Kevin Ault, professor, Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Emory University School of Medicine, will be discussing what moms and moms-to-be should know and do to keep themselves and their families healthy during influenza season. Julie Moise, a parent and FFF board member, will also share her personal story about her infant's battle with influenza and her involvement with FFF.

View the webinar to become better informed and find out how you can get involved to help raise awareness in your community about the importance of flu vaccination – the single, best preventative measure a mom can take each and every year! A recording of this November 29 webinar will be available on the [Families Fighting Flu](#).

7. **Check Out the European Scientific Working Group (ESWI) on Influenza's Flu Community Site!**

The ESWI Flu Community is an information and discussion platform for anyone who is interested in reducing the impact of influenza on public health. Interested persons are invited to [join](#) the [site](#).

8. **New Computer Model Uses Weather Forecasting Technology to Predict Regional Peaks in Influenza Outbreaks**

A [story](#) reports on a Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) [paper](#) that details a system that adapts techniques used in modern weather prediction to turn real-time, web-based estimates of influenza infection into local forecasts of seasonal influenza.

9. Making an Influenza Vaccine Without the Virus

Using synthetic messenger RNA (mRNA) instead of proteins purified from viruses, German scientists have shown they can protect mice, ferrets, and pigs against influenza.

Scientists at the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute (Germany's Federal Research Institute for Animal Health), and biotech company CureVac in Tübingen designed a piece of mRNA encoding the hemagglutinin of the influenza strain H1N1. Cells use mRNA to shuttle the information contained in the genome from the nucleus into the periphery of the cell, where it is translated into a protein. By injecting synthetic mRNA into the skin of mice, the researchers coaxed the animals' cells into producing the virus protein themselves. This elicited an immune response that later protected the animals from infection with otherwise lethal doses of influenza virus, the researchers reported online on 25 November in *Nature Biotechnology*.

News stories about this research are available [here](#) and [here](#). An [abstract](#) from *Nature Biotechnology* is available.

10. Scientists Describe Elusive Replication Machinery of Influenza Viruses

In the journal *Science*, scientists at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) describe a major advance in understanding how influenza viruses replicate within infected cells. The researchers used cutting-edge molecular biology and electron-microscopy techniques to "see" one of influenza's essential protein complexes in unprecedented detail. The images generated in the study show influenza virus proteins in the act of self-replication, highlighting the virus's vulnerabilities that are sure to be of interest to drug developers. The story may be seen [here](#).

11. Study Says Air Travel Restrictions Should be a Priority When New Influenza Pandemic Begins Overseas

In a report published in *BMC Infectious Diseases*, researchers say their study suggests that air travel restrictions should be priorities for consideration when a new influenza pandemic begins overseas. The paper suggests that during the early stages of a new influenza pandemic, travel restriction is an immediate and non-pharmaceutical means of retarding incidence growth. It extends the timeframe of effective mitigation, especially when the characteristics of the emerging virus are unknown. The provisional PDF is available [here](#), and a news story may be viewed [here](#).

12. 2012-2013 Influenza Vaccine Information Statements Are Now Available

The [influenza vaccine information statements](#) have recently been updated and are now available.) Both the TIV and LAIV VISs, and the TIV Large Print edition, have been updated. RTF files are also available. All are dated 7/2/2012.

These editions have been converted to the updated VIS format, but the text in both VISs is identical to that in last year's influenza VISs. Note that there will be minor updates in the ACIP influenza recommendations, but these do not affect the VIS language.

13. Summit Website Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!

Remember to visit the Summit [website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources, as well as archived copies of the weekly newsletters!