Emergency Departments in Maryland reported a total of visits to Emergency Departments.

ILINet Sentinel Providers
Twenty-four sentinel providers reported a total of 4,497 visits this week. Of those, 152 (3.4%) were visits for ILI. This is above the Maryland baseline of 2.0%.

ILI Intensity Levels

- Minimal
- Low
- Moderate
- High

Influenza Geographic Activity

- No Activity
- Sporadic
- Local
- Regional
- Widespread

Visits to Emergency Departments for ILI
Emergency Departments in Maryland reported a total of 42,374 visits this week through the ESSENCE surveillance system. Of those, 1,654 (3.9%) were visits for ILI.

Neighboring states’ influenza information:
- Delaware http://dhss.delaware.gov/dph/epi/influenzhahome.html
- District of Columbia http://doh.dc.gov/service/influenza
Community-based Influenza Surveillance (MRITS)
MRITS is the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking System, a weekly survey for influenza-like illness (ILI). A total of 588 residents responded to the MRITS survey this week. Of those, 17 (2.9%) reported having ILI and missing greater than 5 days of regular daily activities.

Clinical Laboratory Influenza Testing
There were 54 clinical laboratories reporting 6,245 influenza diagnostic tests, mostly rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDTs). Of those, 1,426 (22.8%) were positive for influenza. Of those testing positive, 1,158 (81%) were influenza Type A and 268 (19%) were influenza Type B. The reliability of RIDTs depends largely on the conditions under which they are used. False-positive (and true-negative) results are more likely to occur when the disease prevalence in the community is low, which is generally at the beginning and end of the influenza season and during the summer.

State Laboratories Administration Influenza Testing
The MDH Laboratories Administration performed a total of 384 PCR tests for influenza and 291 (75.8%) were positive for influenza. Of those testing positive, 222 (76.3%) were positive for Type A (H3) and 69 (23.7%) were positive for Type A (H1). PCR testing is more reliable than RIDT. The MDH testing identifies subtypes of influenza A and lineages of influenza B, information that is not available from the RIDT results. The table below summarizes results by type, subtype, and lineage.

Where to get an influenza vaccination
Interested in getting a flu vaccine for the 2017-18 influenza season? Go to https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/influenza/Pages/getvaccinated.aspx and click on your county/city of residence. You will be redirected to your local health department website for local information on where to get your flu vaccine.
Influenza-associated Hospitalizations
A total of 156 influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported this week. (A person with an overnight hospital stay along with a positive influenza test of any kind, e.g., RIDT or PCR, is considered an “influenza-associated hospitalization” for purposes of influenza surveillance.)

Outbreaks of Respiratory Disease
There were seven respiratory outbreaks reported to MDH this week. (Disease outbreaks of any kind are reportable in Maryland. Respiratory outbreaks may be reclassified once a causative agent is detected, e.g., from ILI to influenza.)

National Influenza Surveillance (CDC)
During week 1 (December 31, 2017-January 6, 2018), influenza activity increased in the United States.

- **Viral Surveillance:** The most frequently identified influenza virus subtype reported by public health laboratories during week 1 was influenza A(H3). The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza in clinical laboratories remained elevated.
- **Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:** The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) was at the system-specific epidemic threshold in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Mortality Surveillance System.
- **Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths:** Seven influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported.
- **Influenza-associated Hospitalizations:** A cumulative rate of 22.7 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations per 100,000 population was reported.
- **Outpatient Illness Surveillance:** The proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was 5.8%, which is above the national baseline of 2.2%. All 10 regions reported ILI at or above region-specific baseline levels. New York City and 26 states experienced high ILI activity; Puerto Rico and 10 states experienced moderate ILI activity; the District of Columbia and six states experienced low ILI activity; and eight states experienced minimal ILI activity.
- **Geographic Spread of Influenza:** The geographic spread of influenza in 49 states was reported as widespread; Guam and one state reported regional activity; the District of Columbia reported local activity; the U.S. Virgin Islands reported sporadic activity; and Puerto Rico did not report.