

Central Oregon Public Health Quarterly

Communicable Disease Update for Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties
Second Quarter Report, 2021

24/7 Communicable Disease reporting lines: : Crook County: 541-447-5165 : Deschutes County: 541-322-7418 : Jefferson County: 541-475-4456

Overview of 2020-2021 Central Oregon Flu Season

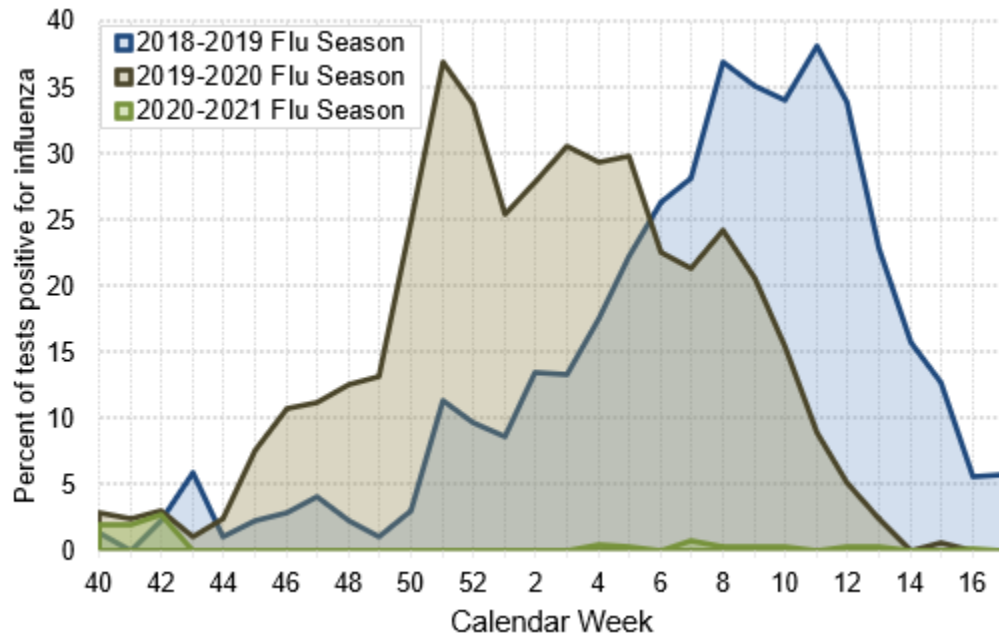
Flu in Central Oregon was unusually low this season.

According to data collected from local Central Oregon labs, 2019-2020 flu season activity (shown in green) peaked during calendar week 42 (October 11 through October 17), followed by a sharp decline in flu activity.

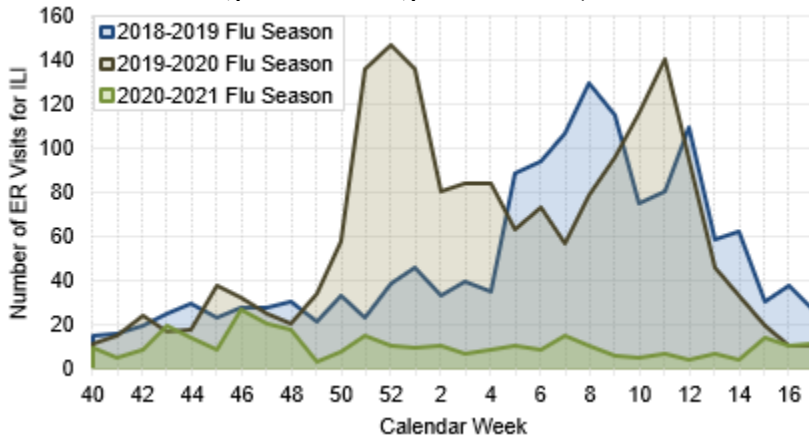
Flu season started similar to the 2019-2020 season, but dropped off after week 42. Reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic likely contribute to low test positivity.

This variability across flu seasons highlights the importance of regular local surveillance to identify when flu activity is increasing or decreasing in our area.

Percent of reported flu tests positive by week, 2018-2021



Weekly Number of ER visits for influenza-like illness among Central Oregon residents, 2018-2021



This flu season appears to have had low virus circulation.

According to CDC, the 2020-2021 flu season had the lowest number of estimated hospitalizations than any season since CDC began making these estimates*.

Among Central Oregon residents, there were around 300 total emergency room (ER) visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) this season, compared to around 1,800 total visits for ILI last season. The number of weekly ILI visits peaked at 27 during calendar week 46 (November 8 through November 14). Last season's peak occurred during calendar week 52 (147 visits), and the 2018-2019 season's peak occurred during week 8 (130 visits).

* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, July 22). *Upcoming 2020-2021 Influenza Season*. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm>

There were no reported flu outbreaks this season in Central Oregon.

The number of flu outbreaks reported this season is lower than the number reported last season (2). There was 1 flu outbreak statwide this season, compared to 93 last season, which did occur in a congregate living setting.

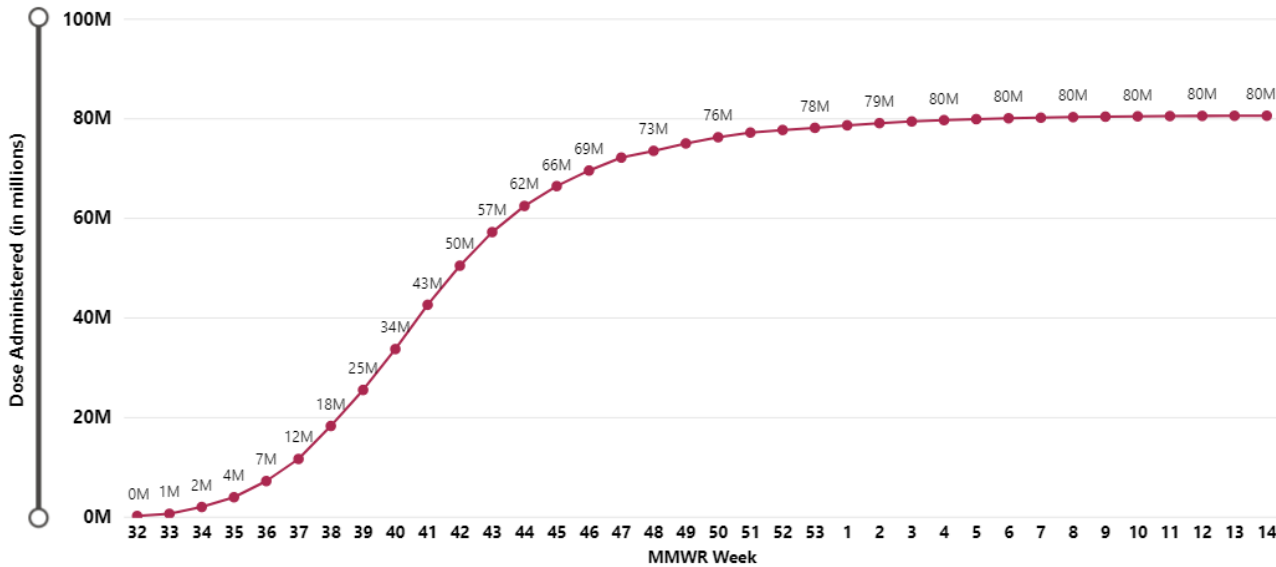
Across Oregon as a whole, there were no flu-associated pediatric deaths reported so far this flu season.

Nationwide, there was only 1 flu-associated pediatric deaths reported so far for this season, which is much lower than both the 2019-2020 season (169) and the 2018-2019 season (199).

Data Source: ESSENCE syndromic surveillance system. Includes visits by Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson County residents to any ER across Oregon.

Flu Vaccine Effectiveness Estimates, 2019-2020 Flu Season

Weekly estimated total number of adult 18+ influenza vaccinations administered in pharmacies and physician medical offices, United States, 2020-2021



According to the CDC, a record 193.8 million doses were distributed in the U.S. during the 2020-2021 flu season.

Flu vaccine effectiveness estimates for 2020-2021 were not estimated due to low influenza virus circulation.

Figure from: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/dashboard/vaccination-administered.html>

Note: The 2020-2021 Flu Season contains an extra week 202053 even though week 202053 is not shown in the Horizontal Axis for graphical display compatibility with seasons containing 52 weeks.

Flu Vaccine Uptake

2020-2021 Oregon Flu Vaccine Doses Reported by Week

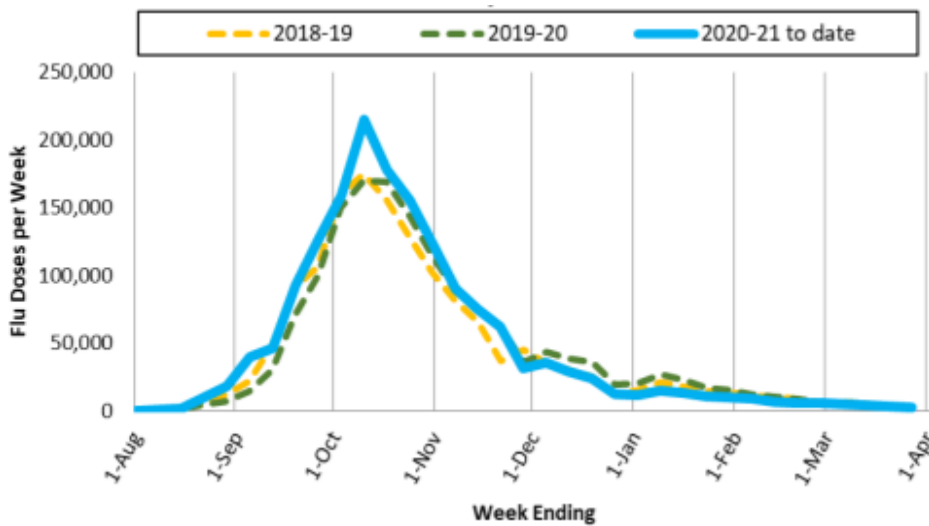


Figure source: Oregon Health Authority

This season observed an early strong surge in influenza immunization, but began to decline quicker than prior seasons.

Around 1.63 million flu vaccines were administered to Oregon residents, which is higher than the 1.7 million administered during the 2019-2020 flu season and the 1.5 million administered during the 2018-2019 flu season.

The peak week for Oregonians to receive a flu vaccine was during week 41 (October 4 through October 10).

Despite the decline observed in mid-October, rates of new immunizations per week remained 18% higher than what is normally seen at this time of year.

Mid-season preliminary seasonal flu immunization rates by age

The graph (to the right) compares the number of influenza immunizations given this season through early March to around the same time last season by age.

Influenza immunization totals in the last two seasons are similar, with this season observing a small decline in childhood influenza immunizations and a small increase in middle-age adult immunizations.

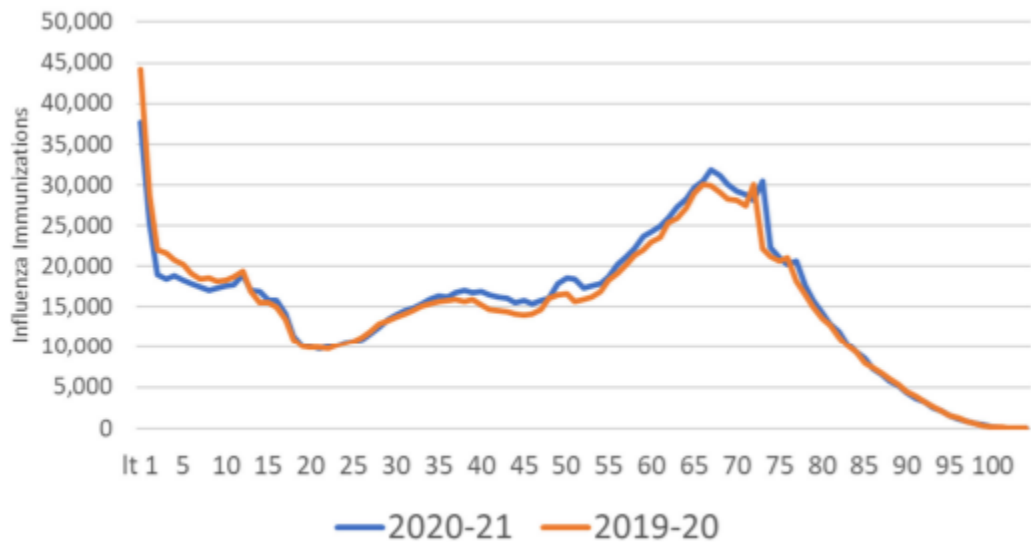


Figure source: Oregon Health Authority