**Respiratory illness update**

Indiana continues to experience high levels of respiratory illness.

* Influenza activity is [very high](https://www.in.gov/health/erc/infectious-disease-epidemiology/diseases-and-conditions-resource-page/influenza/influenza-dashboard/)
* COVID-19 community levels are [substantial to high](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=Indiana&data-type=Risk)
* RSV case rates are declining, but remain [significant](https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/nrevss/rsv/state.html#IN)

Please stay vigilant and continue to practice mitigation strategies proven to help reduce illness, including the three Cs – clean by washing hands often for at least 20 seconds, cover a cough or sneeze, and contain germs by staying home if you’re sick. It’s not too late to get either a flu shot or a COVID-19 vaccine, if you haven’t already.

Every U.S. household is eligible to [order free at-home COVID-⁠19 tests](https://www.covid.gov/tests) (call 800-232-0233).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is also investigating an increase in strep infections among children. There is a national shortage of the liquid antibiotic (amoxicillin suspension) most often prescribed to children to treat group A strep infections. The shortage is anticipated to last several months.

Refer to the CDC for [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html) for more helpful information.

As a reminder, principals should have received an email sent in partnership between the Indiana Department of Health and the Indiana Department of Education on Tuesday, January 3. The email includes a link to complete a brief survey. Please take a few minutes to do this by Tuesday, January17. Please email backtoschool@isdh.in.gov if you didn’t receive this message. Thank you in advance for participating!