



December 22, 2014

# MESH DAILY SITUATIONAL AWARENESS BRIEF



Marion County  
Medical Multi-Agency  
Coordination Center

## NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM

No active alerts



74°

Mostly Sunny

Mostly sunny, with a high near 74. West southwest wind 11 to 13 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.



45°

Partly Cloudy

Partly cloudy, with a low around 45. Southwest wind 11 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 22 mph.



ASTHMA INDEX

1



UV INDEX

5

## THREAT ANALYSIS

### Flu cases causing surge in emergency departments across the country

Influenza season has hit hard and early this year. Hospitals around the nation are reporting surges in emergency department (ED) census and increased numbers of patients admitted with flu-like symptoms. Per the request of the Marion County Public Health Department (MCPHD), local hospitals began implementing Tier 1 visitor restrictions last week, limiting visitors to a patient's immediate family, and restricting people under the age of 18 and adults who have flu-like symptoms. The restrictions will remain in place until MCPHD and the Indianapolis Coalition for Patient Safety determine they are no longer needed. Many other cities and counties across the nation are taking similar measures. (Sources: [Indianapolis Star](#), [MCPHD](#), [MLive](#), [11Alive](#))

One reason for the high flu activity may be the limited efficacy of this year's flu vaccine against one of the primary viral strains currently circulating, A H3N2. Despite the decreased effectiveness, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) still recommend getting the flu vaccine, as it may reduce severe outcomes such as hospitalizations and death. (Source: [CDC](#))

Healthcare providers have been advised to prescribe antivirals Tamiflu and Relenza to high-risk patients displaying flu-like symptoms as soon as possible, even before laboratory diagnosis confirms the infection. However, these antivirals used as treatment or prophylaxis may not be as effective as previously thought, according to a recent review of clinical data in the British Medical Journal. Therefore, encouraging flu prevention in individuals and taking measures to limit spread within healthcare facilities and the greater population are very important during this heavy flu season. (Sources: [CDC](#), [Cochrane Collaboration](#), [HCPLive](#))

## ACTION STEPS

1

Require patients entering your healthcare facility with flu-like symptoms to wear a mask in public areas like waiting rooms. (Source: [WANE.com](http://WANE.com))

2

Engage providers and public information officers to help reduce ED traffic by advising patients to first seek care from a primary provider and only visit the ED if they are severely ill or in a group at high risk for complications from the flu. Individuals with mild illness should rest at home, keep hydrated and treat symptoms as needed. (Source: [CDC](http://CDC))

3

Review your organization's policies for management of ill healthcare workers and make sure they comply with [CDC recommendations](#), including exclusion from work for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

MONDAY

22

**Straight No Chaser: The  
Happy Hour Tour**  
*Murat Theatre*

**Dave Chappelle**  
*Old National Centre*

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