

Full guide to the 2026-2027 flu, COVID-19 and RSV season (Original article – Broadcast version)

INTRO:

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS SEASON IS HERE – AND MEDICAL EXPERTS ARE ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO TAKE STEPS NOW TO PROTECT THEMSELVES... AND THEIR LOVED ONES.

TAKE VO

AS TEMPS DROP – AND FAMILIES SPEND MORE TIME INDOORS – RESPIRATORY VIRUSES BECOME AN INCREASING CONCERN. THIS FALL – FLU ACTIVITY IS ALREADY APPEARING EARLIER IN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY... RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT THE MONTHS AHEAD COULD LOOK LIKE.

DR. JON C. MICHEL – THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL SPECIALTIES SERVICE LINE WITH OSF HEALTHCARE – SAYS THE C-D-C IS PREDICTING THAT THE 2027 VIRUS SEASON SHOULD BE SIMILAR TO LAST YEAR'S. HE ADDS THAT THE WEST COAST IS SEEING AN EARLIER SHIFT IN FLU CASES AS WELL.

BUT AN EARLIER ARRIVAL DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN A MORE SEVERE RESPIRATORY ILLNESS SEASON. DR. MICHEL SAYS IT'S IMPORTANT TO PREPARE NOW... RATHER THAN WAIT FOR CASES TO BECOME MORE WIDESPREAD.

TAKE SOT | DR. JON C. MICHAEL | VICE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL SPECIALTIES SERVICE LINE | OSF HEALTHCARE

"The three that we focus on the most are the flu, COVID-19 and RSV. We do that because we have vaccinations for those viruses, we have therapies for those viruses and they tend to be the ones that make you quite sick," Dr. Michel says. "There's a wide variety of other cold viruses that we could diagnose now, but it's mostly academic and interesting. There's a rhinovirus, or the common cold, there's the parainfluenza virus. We don't have treatments for those, but it's important to understand what the patient has so we can tell prognosis and tell the duration of illness."

VO TAG

DR. MICHEL SAYS ADVANCEMENTS IN MEDICAL TESTING HAVE MADE IT EASIER TO IDENTIFY WHICH VIRUS IS CAUSING AN ILLNESS. TODAY – TESTING PANELS ALLOW MEDICAL TEAMS TO CHECK FOR MULTIPLE VIRUSES... INCLUDING R-S-V... HELPING THEM MAKE MORE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR CARE.