



**December
2025**

MONTHLY DISEASE SURVEILLANCE REPORT

OTSEGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Otsego County Data Dashboards



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

New York State Department of Health Urges New Yorkers To Get Vaccinated As Flu Cases Remain High

Department Emphasizes the Importance of Vaccination During Flu Season

The New York State Department of Health urges New Yorkers to get vaccinated against influenza as flu activity remains high statewide. Vaccination is the best way to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

Although flu-related hospitalizations decreased slightly for the week ending January 3, with 4,228 hospitalizations and 28,544 reported cases, activity remains higher than last year's peak. State Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald warned this may be a long flu season and emphasized that early antiviral treatment—within 48 hours of symptom onset—can be effective.

Flu symptoms include fever or chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, fatigue, and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea, especially in children.

It is not too late to get vaccinated. The flu vaccine is widely available for people ages 6 months and older and is especially important for young children, pregnant women, older adults, and those with chronic health conditions.

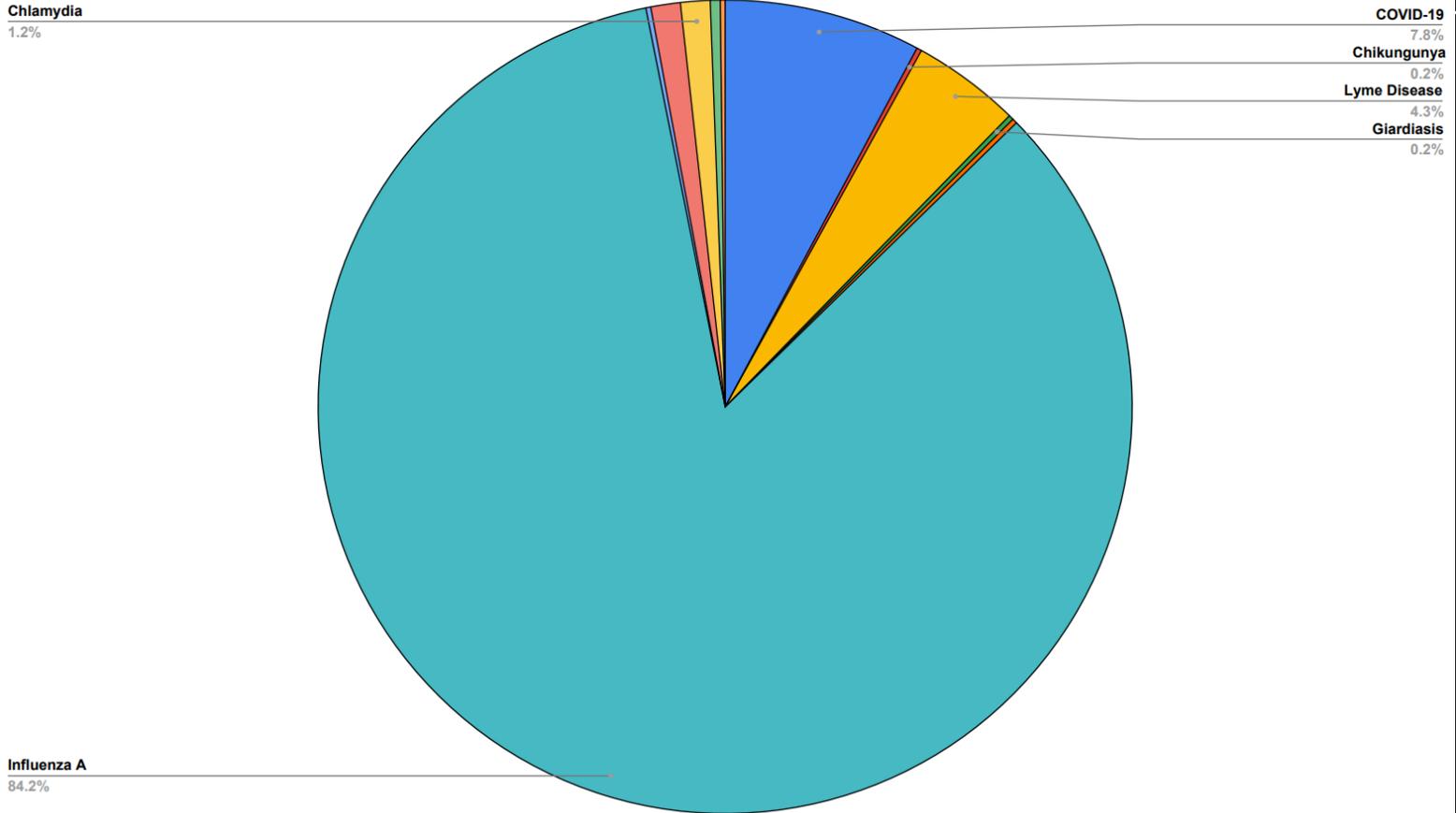
In addition to vaccination, preventive steps such as frequent handwashing, avoiding close contact with sick individuals, staying home when ill, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces can help reduce the spread of flu and other respiratory viruses.

For the full press release visit:

https://www.health.ny.gov/press/releases/2026/2026-01-09_get_flu_vaccinated.htm

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Percentage of Confirmed Cases of Communicable Diseases by Type (n=516)



Communicable diseases are diseases which are spread from person to person, or animal, surface or food to a person. These are also known as transmissible diseases or infectious diseases. Communicable diseases are caused by pathogens such as viruses, bacteria and fungi and are spread by way of air, water, food or bodily fluids.

**** Lyme Disease numbers are not final until NYS DOH review ****

INFLUENZA

New cases in Otsego County

431

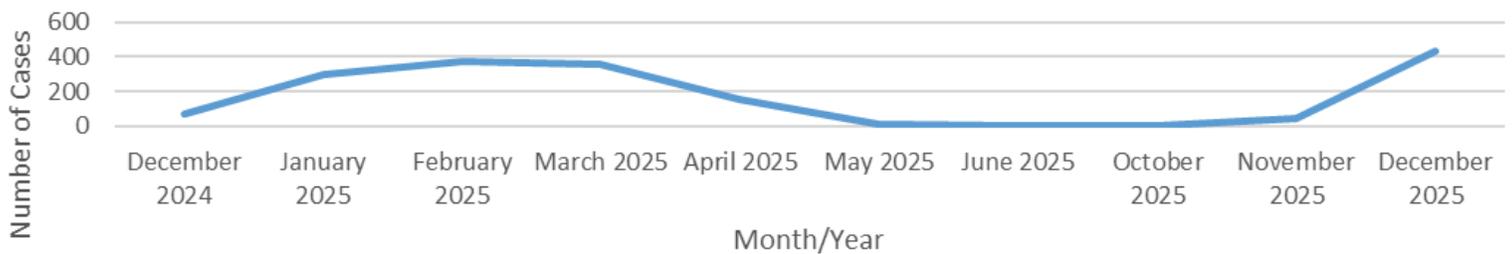
In December of 2024
there were only 73 cases
of the flu!!!

Total cases in Otsego County

482

2025-26 season

Number of Cases (2025-26 Season)



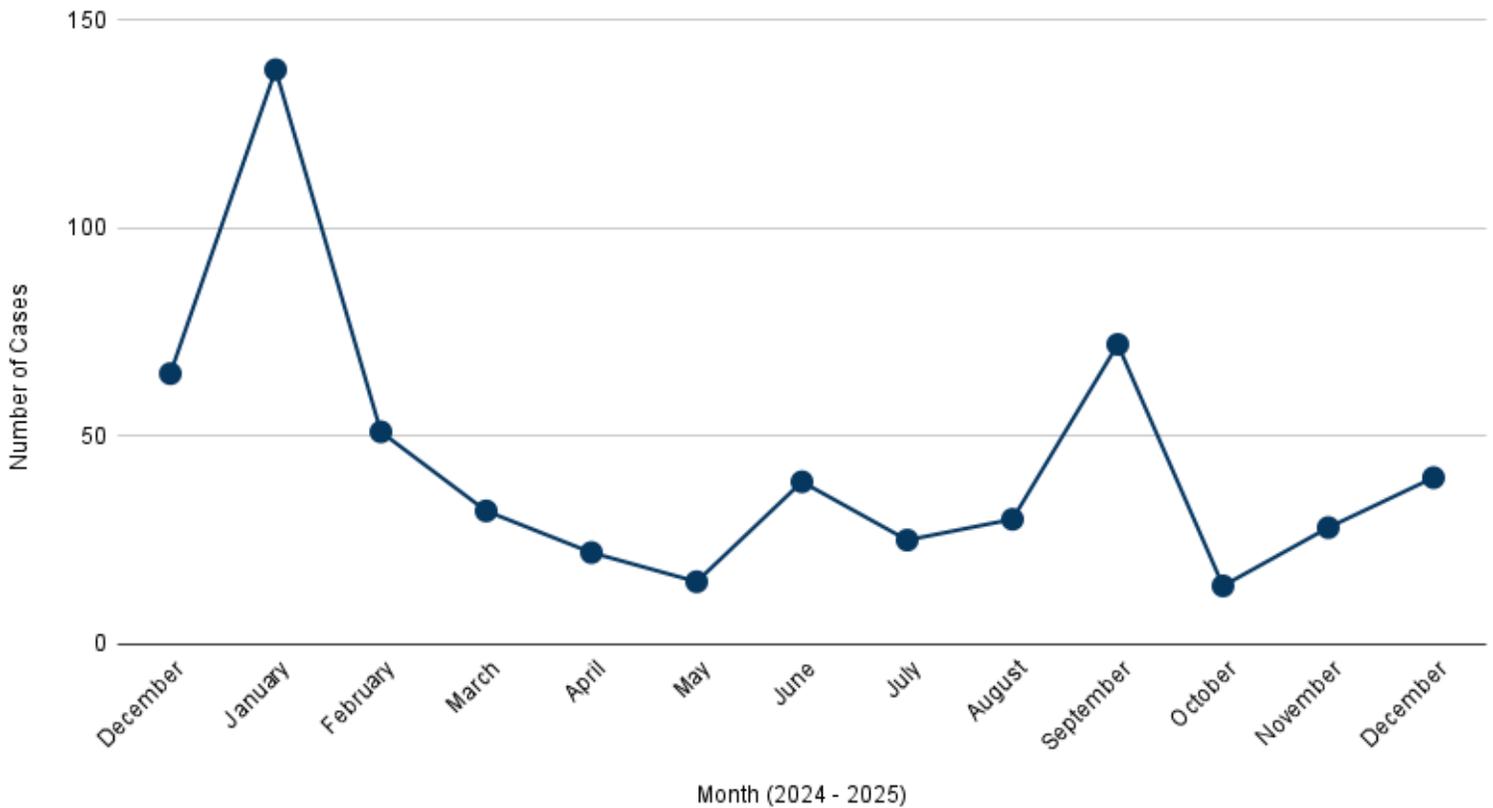
Click [HERE](#) to visit our
influenza dashboard to
see additional influenza
data

COVID

New cases in Otsego County

40

COVID



RABIES

Animal Bites Reported

7

**Number of Animals Sent
for Rabies Testing**

2

**Individuals sent for
Post Exposure Treatment**

1

**Animal Specimens Testing
Positive for Rabies**

0

There are 3 main ways to prevent exposure to rabies for both humans and pets. These include:

- Vaccination of pets: It is a NYS law that your cats, dogs and ferrets be vaccinated for rabies. It is also a NYS law that any unvaccinated pet exposed to a rabid or suspected rabid animal be euthanized or quarantined for 6 months at owners' expense.
- Avoidance of wild animals
- Testing of animals: If there is a bat or other animal in your home that you think might have scratched or bitten someone, catch it and have it sent for rabies testing. You should contact the health department any time you find a bat in the home to discuss the situation.

Upcoming Rabies Clinics

All clinics are 6-8pm

No appointment Needed

All of our clinics for 2025 have concluded, our 2026 schedule will be out in the near future!



MONTHLY HEALTH TOPIC

Winter Wellness Guide

Winter brings crisp air, cozy routines, and—if we're not careful—a few added challenges to our overall well-being. Shorter days, colder temperatures, seasonal illnesses, and changes in mood can all make it harder to stay healthy and active during the winter months. Taking a few extra precautions can go a long way in keeping you and your family safe.

Snowblower Safety: Preventing Winter Injuries

Snowblowers are valuable tools during harsh winter weather, especially when snow quickly accumulates on driveways, sidewalks, and walkways. While they make snow removal easier, they can also pose serious safety risks if not used properly. Always follow basic safety guidelines when operating a snowblower to reduce the risk of injury.

How to Shovel Snow Safely: Avoiding Low Back Pain

Snow shoveling is an unavoidable part of winter. Following these tips can help reduce your risk of injury:

- Warm up first. Spend five to ten minutes warming up before shoveling. Cold, tight muscles are more prone to injury. A brisk walk followed by gentle stretching of the back and hamstrings can help prepare your body.
- Choose the right shovel. Use a lightweight plastic shovel to minimize lifting strain. Ergonomic shovels with curved handles can reduce bending, and smaller shovels limit how much snow you lift at once.
- Use proper technique. Whenever possible, push snow to the side instead of lifting it. If lifting is necessary, grip the shovel with one hand near the blade and the other on the handle. Face the direction you are moving, bend at the hips and knees, lift with your legs, and keep your back straight. Avoid twisting your torso, overreaching, or tossing snow—walk it to the new location instead.
- Pace yourself. Lift small amounts of snow and clear deep snow in layers. Take breaks every 15 minutes to allow your muscles time to recover.
- Consider alternatives. If possible, avoid shoveling altogether by using a snowblower or arranging for other snow removal options.

What Every Parent Should Know About Car Seats and Winter Coats

During the winter months, children are often bundled in thick coats to stay warm. However, placing a child in a car seat while wearing bulky outerwear can be dangerous. Puffy jackets create extra space between the child and the harness, preventing the straps from fitting snugly enough to properly protect them in a crash. For safety, remove bulky coats before buckling children into their car seats and use blankets over the harness to keep them warm instead.