



Walgreens Boots Alliance

## Walgreens Launches Annual Flu Index to Help Communities Track Flu Activity

October 30, 2024

*Walgreens encourages vaccination now ahead of the respiratory season and the holidays*

DEERFIELD, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 30, 2024-- Walgreens has launched the 2024-2025 [Walgreens Flu Index](#), an online, interactive tool that tracks weekly flu activity based on flu-related prescription data across the company's community pharmacy locations nationwide.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20241030359028/en/>



Young patient high-fives pharmacist after vaccination at Walgreens (Photo: Business Wire)

For 11 years, the Walgreens Flu Index has provided an early and accurate view of disease trends. Historical data from the Walgreens Flu Index shows that southern states tend to see earlier and steeper peaks in flu activity when compared to the rest of the country.

"We continue to monitor the emergence of respiratory illnesses, and the Flu Index has been a reliable view of disease spread," said Rick Gates, chief pharmacy officer. "Our goal is to protect communities from flu, as well as other seasonal viruses like COVID-19 and RSV."

Even though early data shows lower initial activity, a seasonal spike is predicted to be around the corner. This is a great time for people to be thinking about protecting themselves before respiratory illnesses emerge and ahead of the holiday season, when we have historically seen illness spike.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu and updated COVID-19 vaccine.<sup>1</sup> During the 2023–2024 season, respiratory illness activity began to increase in early November and peaked in late December, though flu remained at elevated levels in the U.S. through February. The U.S. also saw surges of COVID-19 and RSV during this time.

"Flu, COVID-19 and RSV vaccines remain the number one way to protect against respiratory viruses this fall and winter and can help reduce the severity of symptoms if you do get sick," said Gates. "In fact, data from the CDC shows that last season, the annual flu shot reduced the risk of flu-related hospitalization and doctor visits by as much as 40%.<sup>2</sup> Now is the time to get your annual flu shot, and other recommended vaccines, to develop immunity and increase your protection before you travel or gather this holiday season with loved ones who might be at a higher risk of developing severe complications."

Walgreens is offering flu, COVID-19, RSV, pneumonia (pneumococcal), and other routine vaccinations appointments as well as walk-ins nationwide.\* To schedule a vaccination appointment, use the [Walgreens app](#), visit [Walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine](https://www.walgreens.com/ScheduleVaccine) or call 1-800-WALGREENS. Patients are able to schedule multiple immunizations during the same visit. Walgreens offers flexible openings, including nights and weekends, and walk-ins are welcome. Vaccines are covered by most insurance plans. Additionally, Walgreens is currently offering patients 20% off your next purchase of \$20 or more as a myWalgreens member when you get any vaccine.\*\*

Individuals who are experiencing a runny nose, cough or other respiratory symptoms should consider getting tested to know with greater confidence which virus they may have and be able to quickly take the necessary steps toward recovery. Walgreens offers a variety of convenient, low-cost options for flu and COVID-19 testing, including an easy combination test for COVID-19 and influenza A/B with results in 30 minutes or less. At-home tests, along with over-the-counter medicine cabinet essentials, are available for delivery in as little as 1 hour.

### About the Walgreens Flu Index®

The Walgreens Flu Index® is an online, interactive tool that ranks the top markets and states for flu activity in the United States, including Puerto Rico, and the top markets and states showing the largest increases in flu activity week-over-week. The index is updated weekly each Tuesday and is available through an online interactive map linked [here](#). Users can search by market or state to see where their geographic area ranks for flu activity in any given week and how current flu activity compares to last season. Through the [time-lapse feature](#) of the Walgreens Flu Index®, users can see how current flu activity compares to activity from last season.

Every week, Walgreens tracks the incremental change of antiviral medications used to treat influenza across thousands of Walgreens and Duane Reade locations nationwide to create the Walgreens Flu Index®. Data for the Walgreens Flu Index® is analyzed at state and geographic market levels to measure absolute impact and incremental change of antiviral medications on a per store average basis and does not include markets in which Walgreens has fewer than 10 retail locations.

The index is not intended to illustrate flu severity, but rather, based on this methodology, to show which populations are experiencing the highest incidence of influenza within the United States and Puerto Rico each week. Low-high rankings are designated based on a normal flu season, defined by an average of the last five flu seasons nationwide. For example, red regions on the Walgreens Flu Index® map indicates a much higher than normal flu season, while green regions indicate a much lower than normal flu season.

Over the last three years, Walgreens has seen other respiratory illness activity captured through this index as respiratory symptoms across disease states can be similar. Walgreens continues to refine this surveillance platform with available data streams.

### About Walgreens

Walgreens ([www.walgreens.com](https://www.walgreens.com)) is included in the U.S. Retail Pharmacy and U.S. Healthcare segments of Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc. (Nasdaq: WBA), an integrated healthcare, pharmacy and retail leader. True to its purpose of "more joyful lives through better health," Walgreens has a more than 120-year heritage of caring for communities and providing trusted pharmacy services, and today is playing a greater role as an independent

partner of choice offering healthcare services that improve care, lower costs, and help patients. Operating nearly 9,000 retail locations across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, Walgreens is proud to serve nearly 9 million customers and patients daily. The company's pharmacists are playing a more critical role in healthcare than ever before, providing a wide range of pharmacy and healthcare services, including those that drive equitable access to care for some of the nation's most underserved populations. Walgreens offers customers and patients a true omnichannel experience, with fully integrated physical and digital platforms designed to deliver high-quality products and healthcare services. Within the U.S. Healthcare segment, Walgreens portfolio also includes businesses in primary care, multi-specialty, post-acute care, urgent care, specialty pharmacy services, population health and provider enablement.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "CDC Recommends Updated 2024-2025 COVID-19 and Flu Vaccines for Fall/Winter Virus Season." June 27, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/s-t0627-vaccine-recommendations.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "This Season's Flu Vaccines Reduced Flu Medical Visits and Hospitalizations Across All Ages" February 29, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/whats-new/2023-2024-vaccines-reduce-medical-visits.html>

\*In some states, a prescription from a healthcare provider is required to receive an RSV vaccine at Walgreens.

\*\*20% off coupon issued for vaccines received between 9/1/2024 - 2/28/2025. Excludes AR, NJ, and NY. Limit three coupons during offer period. Must be a myWalgreens member. Terms and restrictions apply to coupon. See coupon for details.

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