

Seqirus Media Monitoring

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Seqirus mentions

No News Recorded

Industry News

Japanese flu vaccine maker taps tobacco plants for fast output

Mitsubishi Tanabe Pharma has developed a technology to produce an influenza vaccine in just four to five weeks using tobacco plants, a process that could revolutionize an industry that has been using the same production method for more than 60 years. The Japanese company plans to file for U.S. approval of production and sales before the March 2019 end of the current fiscal year, and hopes to bring the new vaccine to the market in fiscal 2019.

<https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Companies/Japanese-flu-vaccine-maker-taps-tobacco-plants-for-fast-output>

China Braces for Vaccine Shortage as Flu Season Approaches

Less than four months after China's last major health crisis, parts of the country are facing a dire shortage of flu vaccine as peak season approaches. In the southern city of Guangzhou, flu vaccines for children are almost completely out of stock, while injections for adults can only be found at a handful of community health centers, local media outlet Yangcheng Evening News reported. The situation isn't any better in the nation's capital: Sources from Beijing's Center for Disease Control and Prevention in October told China Securities Journal. Higher public demand isn't the only factor contributing to this year's vaccine shortage: Stocks from manufacturers are way down as well. "The reasons [for the drop in production] are complicated," Xia Huacheng, head of flu product development at Sanofi, said at the China International Import Expo in Shanghai, where the company is promoting its latest flu vaccine. That product, Flublok, has not yet been approved for the Chinese market.

<http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1003170/china-braces-for-vaccine-shortage-as-flu-season-approaches>

What the approval of a new flu drug means for you

For the first time in 20 years, there's a new antiviral flu treatment, Xofluza. But despite the new drug, doctors are still urging patients to get their flu shots. Doctors say this new treatment comes with a big price tag. The wholesale cost to pharmacies is about \$150. Experts say the new antiviral flu treatment is expected to soon hit the market in the next few weeks, by mid-to-late November.

<https://www.wmbfnews.com/2018/11/07/what-approval-new-flu-drug-means-you/>

Pandemic Influenza News

On 100-year anniversary of influenza outbreak that killed 9000 Kiwis, fresh concerns arise

In New Zealand, Professor Michael Baker from the University of Otago Wellington's public health department is concerned the country is falling out of step with many westernised countries when it comes to dealing with outbreaks of contagious diseases. "New Zealand really is the odd one out now in not having an agency whose job it is to do the surveillance and control of these events," Mr Baker said. While the Ministry of Health has a "great pandemic plan with excellent people working on this," he said, the country is lacking the infrastructure to implement the plan with speed and effectiveness.

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/100-year-anniversary-influenza-outbreak-killed-9000-kiwis-fresh-concerns-arise>

News Scan for Nov 07, 2018

A serological survey of shelter workers exposed to cats infected in an outbreak of low-pathogenic H7N2 avian influenza in New York City in 2016 found one additional human case, bolstering evidence of cat-to-human transmission. Researchers from New York City and the CDC reported their findings on Nov 5 in the Journal of Infectious Diseases. The individual who tested positive is only the fourth person in the United States to be infected with an H7N2 virus and the only serologically confirmed human infection connected to cat exposure.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2018/11/news-scan-nov-07-2018>

Academic studies

Persuading more health workers to have flu jab needs new approach

Persuading more health workers across the continent to have the flu jab to protect themselves and their patients cannot be done through facts and statistics alone, new research by a leading behavioral scientist from Kingston University in London has revealed. Instead it demands a new approach that connects with people emotionally to sustain immunization rates at effective levels. Nearly one third of nurses, GPs and other health professionals surveyed by professor of organizational behavior Gaëlle Vallée-Tourangeau from Kingston Business School and her co-researcher Dr George Kassianos, national immunization lead for the Royal College of General Practitioners, were hesitant about having the vaccine.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20181107/Persuading-more-health-workers-to-have-flu-jab-needs-new-approach.aspx>

Fighting the flu thanks to llamas

Thanks to llamas' specific immune system properties, researchers have managed to create antibodies that could work against all flu virus types. This could be an interesting development as current seasonal flu vaccines only offer around 50 to 60% protection

http://www.lemonde.fr/sciences/article/2018/11/07/lutte-contre-la-grippe-saisonniere-le-coup-de-pouce-du-lama_5379938_1650684.html

Johns Hopkins researchers study how being male or female affects flu shot response

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University are investigating how biological sex affects patients' immune responses to the influenza vaccine. The researchers received an \$8 million grant from the NIH to expand on research that creates a framework for the significance of biological sex in flu vaccine immune responses. The grant will develop a new specialized research center at Johns Hopkins over the next five years. The center will conduct three major studies and offer more research and education opportunities for graduate students and junior faculty.

<http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/quality/johns-hopkins-researchers-study-how-being-male-or-female-affects-flu-shot-response.html>

Influenza Vaccines May Protect Against Lab-Confirmed Influenza-Linked Hospitalization During Pregnancy

During pregnancy, the use of influenza vaccines moderately protected against laboratory-confirmed influenza-linked hospitalization over the course of 6 influenza seasons, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-coauthored study published in Clinical Infectious Diseases

<http://www.clinicaladvisor.com/influenza-information-center/influenza-vaccines-may-protect-against-hospitalization-resulting-from-influenza-during-pregnancy/article/813018/>

Flu lasts for more than an hour in air and on surfaces - why cleaning can really help

Seema Lakdawala, University of Pittsburgh and Linsey Marr, Virginia Tech, study how the flu virus

spreads between people. They write that "While we strongly encourage everyone to get the flu vaccine, the findings from our study on the stability of flu viruses in the air can provide useful information for parents, teachers and health care officials to limit the spread of flu in the community."

<http://www.timesunion.com/news/article/Flu-lasts-for-more-than-an-hour-in-air-and-on-13371187.php>

Pediatric influenza news

"Flu can be a horrible illness for little children"

Parents in London are advised to get their children vaccinated against the flu. Patricia Moses, a mother-of-three from London, decided that her son, when he was two years old, should have the flu nasal spray vaccine. She said: "When it comes to our children, we all want to protect them as best we can. I received a text from my GP surgery advising that my son was eligible for a free flu nasal spray vaccination."

<http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/%E2%80%9Cflu-can-be-horrible-illness-little-children%E2%80%9D>

Raising Awareness About the Flu and Vaccination in the Face of Tragedy

In the U.S., the Sidari family and organizations like Families Fighting Flu aim to help others through education and support. Leon Sidari's parents have set up a GoFundMe page to raise money for a nonprofit charity to help other families, and they hope to raise awareness about the importance of getting vaccinated through a #FluShotsforLeon Twitter campaign. Families Fighting Flu (FFF), a nonprofit organization based in Arlington, Virginia, helps protect families and communities from flu. Its board of directors includes parents of children who had to be hospitalized or died because of the flu.

<http://www.everydayhealth.com/flu/raising-awareness-about-flu-vaccination-face-tragedy/>

Pregnant women urged to have free flu vaccine

In Oxfordshire, GPs and some community pharmacies and maternity services' scan clinics are offering the flu vaccine free of charge to pregnant women. Clinical locality director at Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Dr Ed Capo-Bianco, said: "It's important for pregnant women to have the vaccine as pregnancy weakens the body's immune system and can cause serious complications for the mother and baby. I urge all pregnant women to visit their GP practice to have the vaccination when contacted by their surgery."

<http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/17204014.pregnant-women-urged-to-have-free-flu-vaccine/>

Over 65's influenza news

Clinical Trials of Texas conducting flu vaccine study for seniors

Clinical Trials of Texas in San Antonio is studying a new type of flu vaccine on seniors 65 and older. According to researchers at CTT, the vaccine is plant based. So far, 50 seniors have received the flu shot. CTT is looking for another 100 seniors to participate. Dr. Douglas Denham, a Medical Expert at CTT, said the study started a couple months ago. "It's a nice new platform. Most of the flu vaccines we have now are made using eggs. So people that have egg allergies or problems that way can't take the flu vaccine. This (one) is actually based on plants"

<http://foxsanantonio.com/news/local/clinical-trials-of-texas-conducting-flu-vaccine-study-for-seniors>

Hints From Heloise: Robust flu vaccine is available

Readers are advised that there's a high-dose flu vaccine that's now available in the U.S. People 65 and older may have weaker immune systems than younger people. That's why, if you're a senior, your doctor may recommend this more robust flu vaccine. It is generally considered safe, but the side effects of the injection may be a bit stronger than the regular flu shot: temporary pain, headache and muscle ache, among other things.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/hints-from-heloise-robust-flu-vaccine-is-available/2018/11/01/59f6249>

General Influenza News

Commentary: Flu vaccine not effective? Think again

Common misperceptions about the effectiveness of the flu vaccine is one reason holding us back from getting vaccinated, says the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health's Dr Clarence Tam. Low awareness of flu vaccines and a lack of prompts to get vaccinated partly explain this. Studies show people are much more likely to get the flu shot if recommended to by a healthcare provider, but only a minority say they get such recommendations.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/should-i-get-a-flu-vaccination-effective-fall-sick-traveling-10905018>

Local medical team advise local residents to get vaccinated against the flu this year

The influenza outbreak in this region at the start of the year still haunts local health teams. Companies were finding many employees out sick with the flu, many members of families or their acquaintances went sick too. The first four months of 2018 saw 1,124 flu cases reported in the district of Unna, a year earlier it was just 173. Dr Roland Staudt warns local residents "The best protection against the flu is preventive vaccination."

<http://www.ruhrnachrichten.de/Nachrichten/Luene/Amtsarzt-raet-zur-Grippe-Impfung-im-Grosshandel-wird-der-Impfstoff-knapp-Plus-1344628.html>

Flu vaccination day on Friday

In Switzerland, the annual flu vaccination day will happen on Friday. People can get vaccinated at their GPs without appointment, or at a pharmacy, for the first time this year.

<http://www.laliberte.ch/news-agence/detail/journee-de-vaccination-contre-la-grippe-vendredi/462854>

A century later, UI experts recall deadly flu outbreak, prepare for new flu season

Experts at the State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa use cutting-edge scientific technology to quickly and accurately identify various infectious diseases, including influenza. Lab microbiologists and molecular scientists were among the first in the nation to successfully detect the deadly H1N1 swine flu in 2009, and also created a novel test to detect the mumps in 2006 when that virus affected nearly 1,500 Iowans.

<http://now.uiowa.edu/2018/11/century-later-ui-experts-recall-deadly-flu-outbreak-prepare-new-flu-season>

Baltimore's Employers have a duty to Protect Their Workers This Flu Season

Last month, Maryland confirmed that the first two cases of the influenza virus had been diagnosed in the state. Strains Type A (H1) and Type B (Victoria) were identified in one adult and one child. Thankfully, hundreds of Baltimore's residents are already protected from the contagious respiratory disease following the Baltimore County Department of Health issuing free flu shots to locals in October. However, each winter local business owners face their workforce being wiped up for up to two weeks as a result of the contagious disease. Therefore, action must be taken to safeguard employees from flu spreading throughout Baltimore's organizations.

<http://baltimorepostexaminer.com/baltimores-employers-have-a-duty-to-protect-their-workers-this-flu-season/2018/11/07>

An HIV Vaccine Study May Explain Why So Few Canadians Get The Flu Shot

Research into why Canadians may be hesitant to get the flu shot has suggested one of the major problems happens to be a matter of trust. Many people simply do not believe the flu shot is the right choice. Now that may change thanks to a recent study out of Kenya. A team of researchers may have figured out why a majority of people may be willing to get a shot but avoid it when the time comes. Means are needed to overcome the same hurdles that keep the minority from getting the shot, namely fear, indecision and the combination of families and religion.

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/jason-tetro/flu-shot-season-vaccine-hiv_a_23581906/

No, It's Really Not Too Late to Get Your Flu Shot

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October. "The longer you wait, the more likely you are to get the flu," says Sean McNeeley, MD, board president of the Urgent Care Association and medical director at University Hospital Urgent Care Network in Cleveland. If you've ever had the flu before, "it's just not something you ever want to get again," he adds.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/wellness/no-it-e2-80-99s-really-not-too-late-to-get-your-flu-shot/ar-BBPs5vf>

People reminded to take up their free flu vaccination

In England, people at increased risk from the effects of the flu are being reminded to take up their free vaccination ahead of the winter months. The vaccination is being offered to people aged 65 and over, pregnant women, those with underlying health conditions, carers and children aged two to nine. Those who are eligible are being urged to take up the offer from their GP or local pharmacy and the earlier they can have it, the better.

<http://www.tamworthinformed.co.uk/reminder-flu-vaccination/>

Flu vaccine causing sickness for some

Despite popular belief, you can't get the flu from a flu shot. Dr. Melissa Martinez, a Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of New Mexico Hospital said it's just not possible. "The injectable virus is not alive. It's a killed version, an inactivated version of the virus," Dr. Martinez said. Just enough to kick-start your body's natural defenses.

<https://www.kob.com/health-news/flu-vaccine-causing-sickness-for-some/5136568/>

Call for at-risk people to sign up for free flu jab

People in South Tyneside who are entitled to a free flu vaccine are being encouraged to take up the offer without delay. Those who can have the vaccine for free are people aged 65 and over, children aged between two and nine and those with an underlying health condition. Local campaigner and fund-raiser Clare Allom, who has diabetes, has already had her flu jab.

<https://www.shieldsgazette.com/news/call-for-at-risk-people-to-sign-up-for-free-flu-jab-1-9430228>

West Cheshire GP urges at risk groups to make sure they get flu jab

Flu kills 8,000 people in England every year - more than eight times the annual total of measles, mumps and rubella combined. Now, a leading West Cheshire GP has urged people with long-term conditions, older people, pregnant women and children to protect themselves and those around them by getting the free flu vaccine. Dr Chris Ritchieson, the chair of NHS West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, warned that flu can lead to serious complications - particularly for those with underlying health conditions.

<https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/west-cheshire-gp-urges-risk-15377756>

Epsom and St Helier urge families and elderly to get flu jab

Senior medical staff at Epsom and St Helier hospitals NHS Trust are urging local families and the elderly to have their flu vaccine this winter. Epsom and St Helier created a video this year starring children from the onsite nurseries as well as staff members from a range of different disciplines to get the message across. The video is stylized as a spoof horror movie trailer to bring attention to the fact that flu can be a dangerous illness for people at risk, such as pregnant women and the over 65s.

<https://www.surreycomet.co.uk/news/17207397.epsom-and-st-helier-urge-families-and-elderly-to-get-flu-jab/>

Burden of disease

First confirmed case of Influenza A in Windsor-Essex this flu season

In Canada, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit is reporting the first confirmed case of influenza A

in Windsor-Essex County. Last year, there were 304 lab confirmed cases of influenza, with the first case being reported on November 8, 2017. The Health Unit is reminding everyone that the best way to protect against the influenza virus and lower your risk of flu is to get the flu vaccine.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-essex-influenza-a-2018-1.4894192>

Man dies of H1N1 in Trichy district

In India, a 67-year-old man, who tested positive for H1N1 succumbed after failing to respond to treatment at a private hospital in Trichy on Wednesday morning.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/man-dies-of-h1n1-in-trichy-district/articleshow/66538886.cms>

1,020 H1N1 influenza cases reported across T.N.

A total of 1,020 H1N1 influenza cases have been reported across Tamil Nadu since the beginning of the year. There have been 17 deaths due to H1N1 influenza in the State, according to Health Secretary J. Radhakrishnan.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/1020-h1n1-influenza-cases-reported-across-tn/article25440111.ece>

32-Year-Old Man, Teen Girl Die Of Swine Flu In Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore

A teenage girl and a man, undergoing treatment for swine flu, died at the government hospital in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore, hospital sources said Wednesday. 32-year old Kathirvel died in the early hours of Wednesday while Subashree, 14, died late Tuesday night, they said. Both were undergoing treatment for H1N1 flu.

<http://www.ndtv.com/tamil-nadu-news/h1n1-flu-swine-flu-in-coimbatore-tamil-nadu-32-year-old-man-teen-girl-die-of-swine-flu-1944114>

Flu's Return Bugging East Valley Residents

The flu has arrived in the East Valley, Arizona, but local experts say it's too early to tell if it's going to be another bad year like the last one. "Every year is completely different," said Jeanene Fowler, spokesperson for the Maricopa County Health Department. "There's so many variables that play into the flu season that it takes a crystal ball. Flu is always changing." Maricopa County has already received its first reports of the season.

<http://santansun.com/2018/11/06/flu-return-bugging-east-valley-residents/>

Early flu season, looking mild

Flu season has officially started in Canada, but so far it looks like it might be a mild one. Besides, the flu vaccine appears to be more efficient this year than last. The recent approval of Xofluza may also be another factor making this flu season less harsh than the last one

<http://www.lesoleil.com/actualite/une-saison-de-la-grippe-hative-mais-qui-sannonce-clemente-c7a98095c19fc764a1277db1dab149cf>

CDC Provides Influenza Updates, New Clinician Resources

From May 20 to Oct. 13, 1.4 percent of the 197,295 respiratory specimens tested for influenza at U.S. clinical laboratories were positive -- about 65 percent of them positive for influenza A viruses and 35 percent for influenza B viruses. The CDC said surveillance showed there hasn't been significant evidence of antigenic drift among circulating influenza A (H3N2) viruses since the selection of viruses for the 2018-19 Northern Hemisphere vaccines was made in February.

<https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20181107cdcflu.html>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

No News Recorded