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**December 18, 2017**

*Update for Ohio News Media*

**Flu Activity in Ohio Elevated to “Widespread”**

*New Flu-Associated Hospitalizations Continue to Trend Above Five-Year Average*

- The Ohio Department of Health issued a news release on Dec. 8 about rising flu activity, and the geographic spread being elevated to “regional.”
- Flu activity in Ohio has now been elevated to “widespread,” the highest level. During last year’s flu season, flu activity in Ohio didn’t reach “widespread” geographic spread until mid-January.
  - During the week ending Dec. 9 (most recent data available), there were 144 new flu-associated hospitalizations in Ohio, compared to 92 the week prior, and 29 during the same week last year. So far this flu season, there have been 401 flu-associated hospitalizations.
- New flu-associated hospitalizations continue to trend above the five-year average (see below).
- The Ohio Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that everyone six months and older get a flu shot as soon as possible as vaccination is the best protection against seasonable flu viruses.

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