

Pediatric Influenza Deaths: Who Is Most at Risk?

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better understand the epidemiology of influenza deaths, Shang et al. ([10.1542/peds.2017-2918](#)), in a study being released this week in our journal, share with us data reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that describes the demographics, underlying medical conditions, and vaccination status of children who died as a result of influenza. The authors note that infants younger than 6 months followed by those 6 months to 23 months were most likely to die, and while the average annual incidence from 2010-2016 was 0.15 deaths per 100,000, no death from flu is an acceptable death. The authors also note that half of the 675 children who died in association with influenza had no underlying medical condition, and of those over 6 months of age, only about a third had been immunized against this virus.

What can we do about the persistence of infant and childhood mortality attributed to influenza? Dr. Kathryn Edwards, specialist in pediatric infectious diseases, shares with us in an accompanying commentary ([10.1542/peds.2017-4313](#)) thoughts about which children may be identified as being most at risk to die from influenza as well as offers us possible steps we can take as health care professionals from a diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive standpoint to reduce the mortality from influenza going forward. There is a lot to learn from this article and commentary so take your best shot and read both, as the first step in reducing the tragic outcomes from this often preventable disease.

- [Epilepsy in Children After Pandemic Influenza Vaccination](#)
- [Changes in Influenza Vaccination Rates After Withdrawal of Live Vaccine](#)
- [COMMITTEE ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES. Recommendations for Prevention and Control of Influenza in Children, 2017 – 2018. Pediatrics. 2017;140\(4\):e20172550](#)
- [Recommendations for Prevention and Control of Influenza in Children, 2017 – 2018](#)
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