



# What we know about **COVID-19 and influenza**

THE LATEST ON THE COVID-19 GLOBAL SITUATION  
& READINESS FOR INFLUENZA DURING THE PANDEMIC

# Overview

- [Update on the global situation](#) ..... 3
- [Readiness for influenza during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) ..... 7
  - [Plan](#) ..... 8
  - [Prevent](#) ..... 9
  - [Care](#) ..... 13
  - [Test & monitor](#) ..... 16
  - [Communicate](#) ..... 19
- [WHO resources on influenza during COVID-19](#) ..... 21
- [How to protect ourselves and others](#) ..... 22
- [Upcoming events](#) ..... 24

# Current global situation

As of 09 November 2020, 10:00AM CEST

- **Nearly 49 million cases**
- 5 countries with highest cumulative number of cases



United States of America



India



Brazil



Russian Federation



France

- **> 1.2 million deaths**
- 5 countries with highest cumulative number of deaths



United States of America



Brazil



India



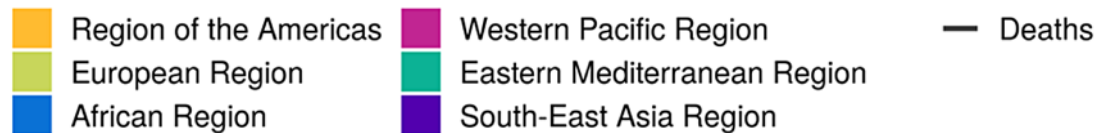
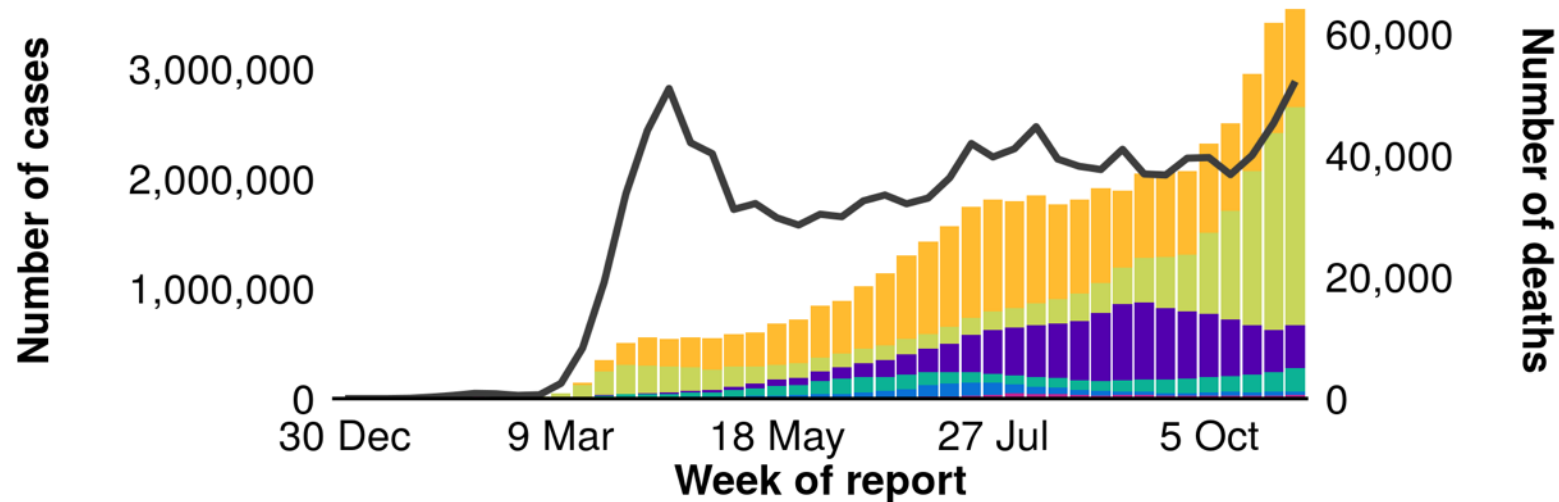
Mexico



The United Kingdom

# Current global situation

Cases reported to WHO as of 09 November 2020, 10:00AM CEST

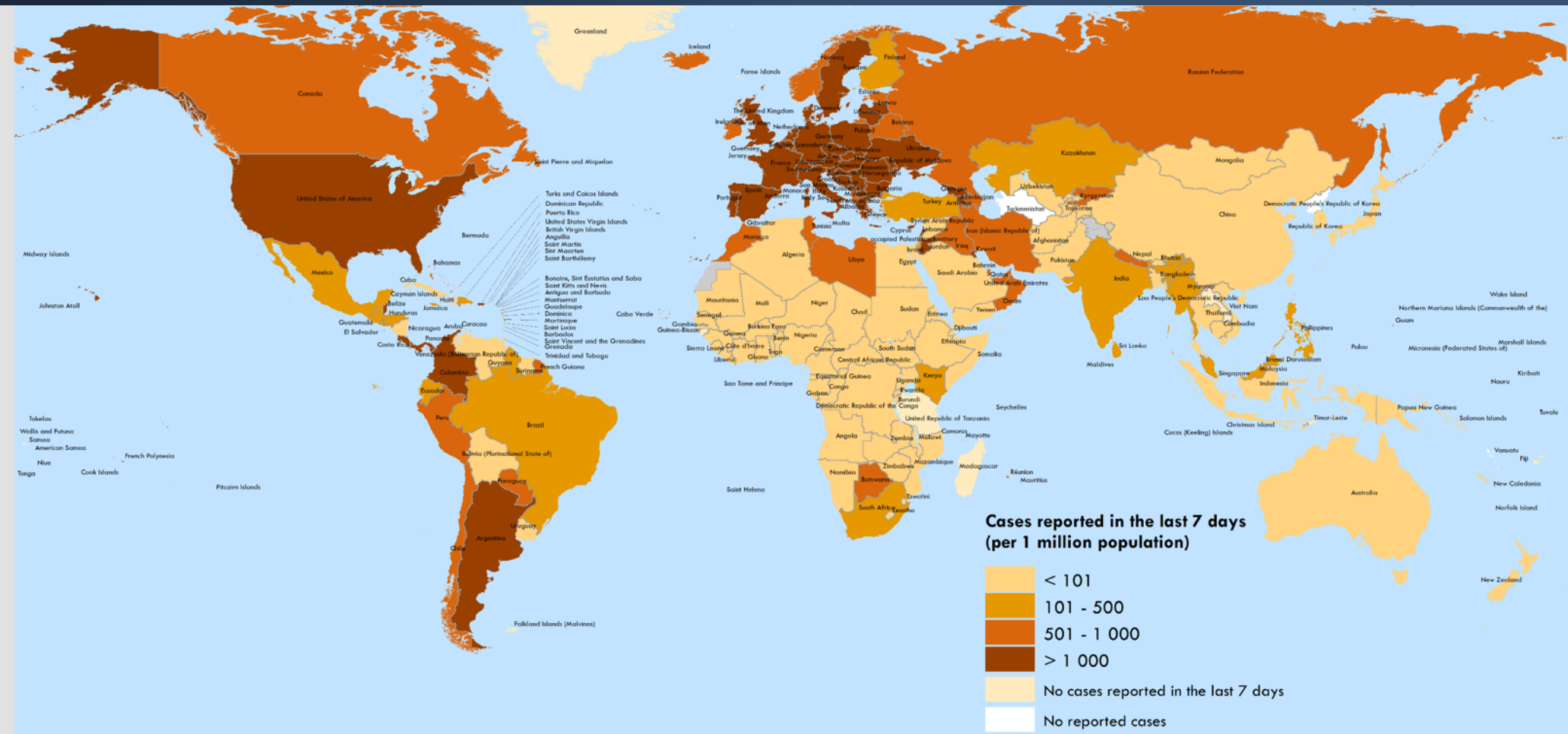


\* Cases depicted by bars; deaths depicted by line

# COVID-19 cases reported in the last 7 days

## Per million population

FROM 02 NOVEMBER 2020, 10:00AM CEST to 08 NOVEMBER 2020, 10:00 AM CEST



Data Source: World Health Organization, United Nations Population Division (population prospect 2020)  
Map Production: WHO Health Emergencies Programme

Not applicable

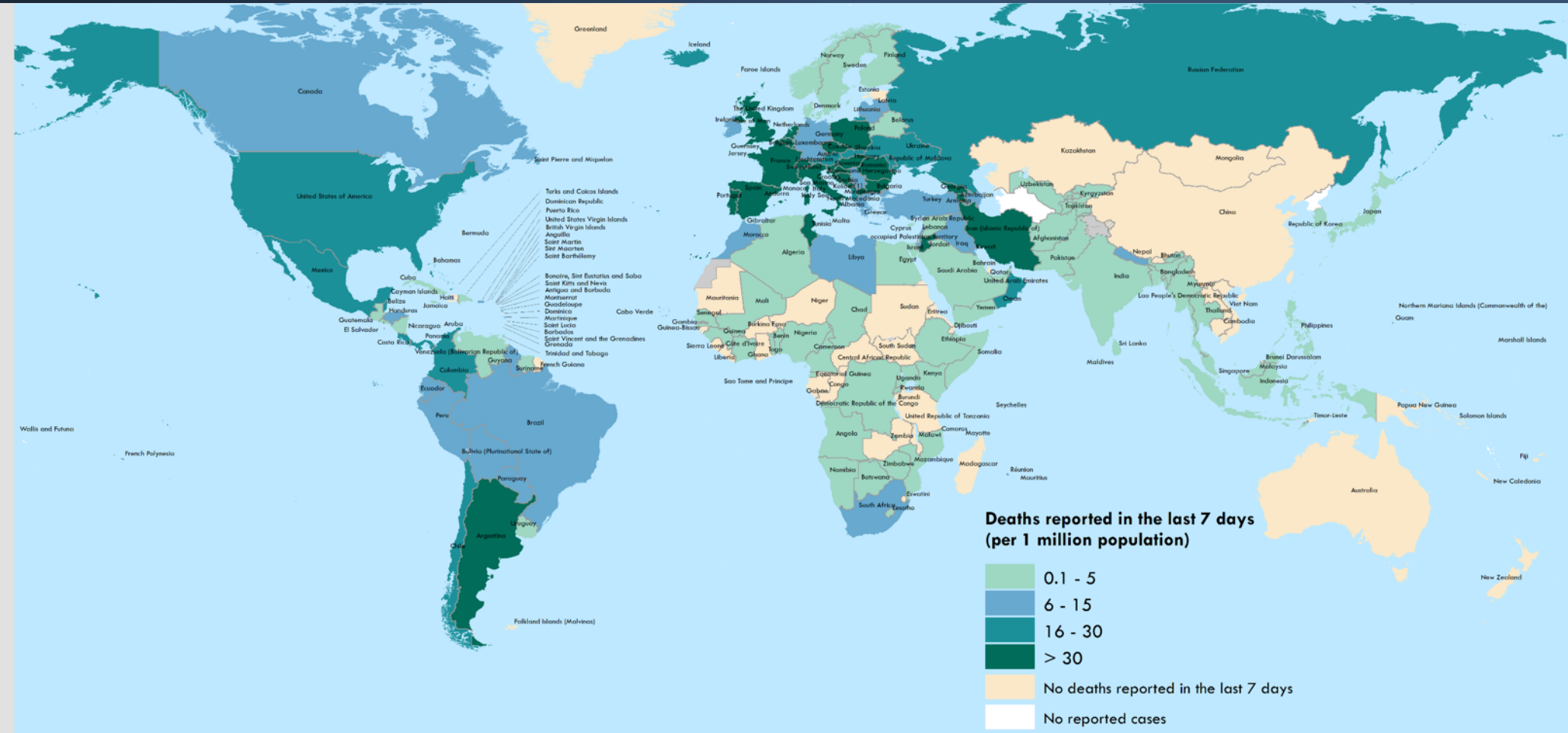
0 2,500 5,000 km  
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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. [1] All references to Kosovo in this document should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Number of cases of Serbia and Kosovo (UNSCR 1244, 1999) have been aggregated for visualization purposes.

# COVID-19 deaths reported in the last 7 days

## Per million population

FROM 02 NOVEMBER 2020, 10:00AM CEST to 08 NOVEMBER 2020, 10:00 AM CEST



Data Source: World Health Organization, United Nations Population Division (population prospect 2020)  
Map Production: WHO Health Emergencies Programme

Not applicable

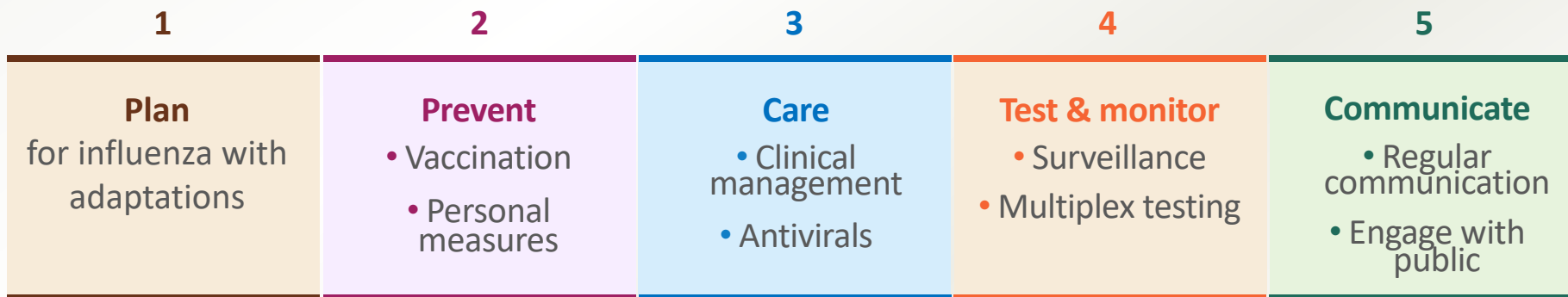
0 2,500 5,000 km  
© World Health Organization 2020, All rights reserved.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. [1] All references to Kosovo in this document should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). Number of cases of Serbia and Kosovo (UNSCR 1244, 1999) have been aggregated for visualization purposes.

## Readiness for influenza during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Different respiratory viruses co-circulate, including seasonal influenza and are responsible for many acute infections and influenza-like illnesses
- Each year, seasonal influenza affects individuals in every country and results in up to one billion cases, three to five million severe cases, and up to 650,000 respiratory-related deaths worldwide<sup>1</sup>
- Countries should be prepared and ensure optimal management of influenza during COVID-19.

### Actions to ensure readiness include:

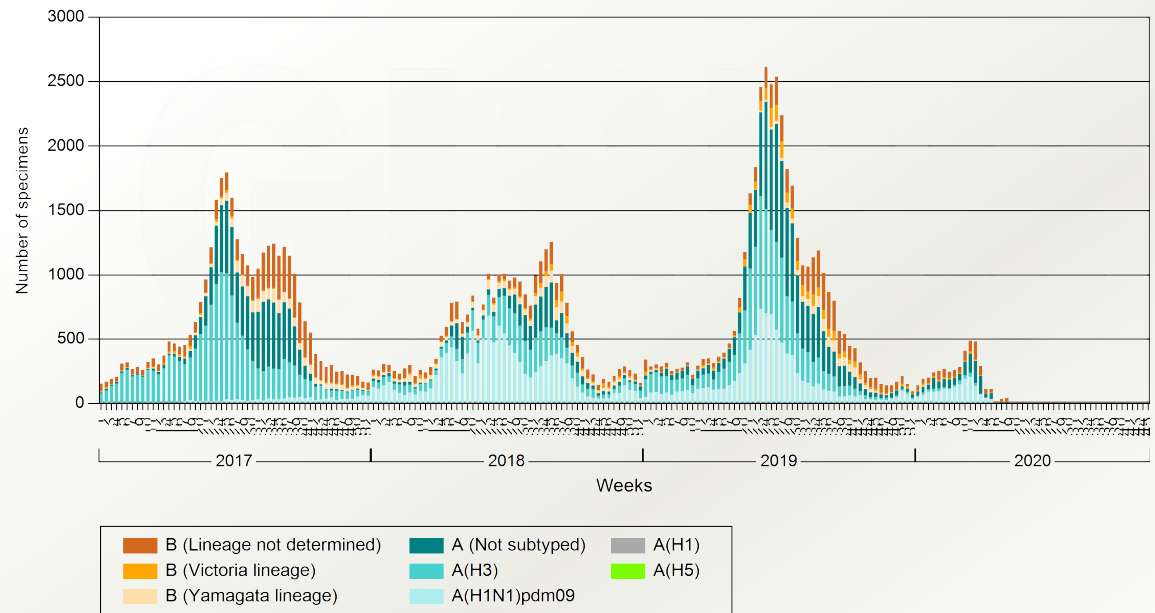


<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5935243/>

# Planning for your influenza season

- The Southern Hemisphere has already experienced its influenza season this year (May to September 2020), providing insights which may be useful to the Northern Hemisphere
- A significant reduction in seasonal influenza cases compared to previous years was observed in the Southern Hemisphere<sup>1</sup>
- This may be due to restrictions put in place for COVID-19. **Appropriate planning is important and may include:**
  - Public health and social measures for COVID-19 and influenza<sup>2,3</sup>

Southern hemisphere: number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype



Data source: FluNet ([www.who.int/flunet](http://www.who.int/flunet)), GISRS

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs\\_laboratory/flunet/en/](https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/flunet/en/)

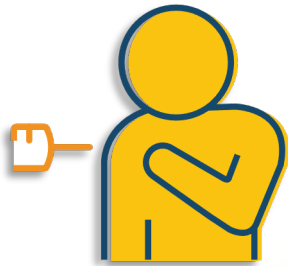
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Influenza-readiness-COVID-19-2020.1>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-in-adjusting-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19-interim-guidance>



# Preventing seasonal influenza during a COVID-19 pandemic

## How to prevent seasonal influenza



**Administer a safe influenza vaccine every year** to prevent severe disease in risk groups<sup>1</sup>



Good hand hygiene



Respiratory etiquette



Physical distancing



Mask use

(aligned with COVID-19 recommendations)

**Ensure individual measures** are implemented<sup>2</sup>

[1. WHO SAGE Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Recommendations during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[2. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-in-adjusting-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19-interim-guidance](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-in-adjusting-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19-interim-guidance)

## Certain populations are identified as priority groups for influenza vaccination

- The following populations are identified for priority use of the influenza vaccine<sup>1</sup>:
  - Young children
  - Pregnant women
  - Older persons
  - Persons with underlying health conditions
  - Health workers
- **Pregnant women and young children are identified as a risk group for seasonal influenza but not for COVID-19**
- During COVID-19 and if supplies are limited, health workers and older persons should be considered as the highest priority risk groups for influenza vaccination<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/wer/2012/wer8747.pdf?ua=1>

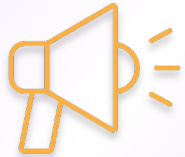
<sup>2</sup> [WHO SAGE Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Recommendations during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

## Population groups with increased risk for severe disease

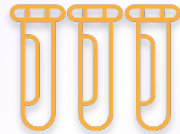
Seasonal influenza	COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Young children (&lt;59 months)</b></li> <li>• <b>Older persons (&gt;65 years old)</b></li> <li>• <b>Pregnant women</b></li> <li>• <b>Persons with chronic conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cardiac conditions (hypertension &amp; cardiovascular disease)</li> <li>- chronic lung conditions (asthma or COPD)</li> <li>- endocrine disorders (diabetes)</li> <li>- neurological disorders (stroke &amp; neurodevelopmental conditions)</li> <li>- chronic kidney disease</li> <li>- metabolic disorders</li> <li>- hematologic disorders</li> <li>- chronic liver disease and other immunosuppressed conditions, including cancer &amp; HIV/AIDS</li> <li>- chronic conditions requiring immunosuppressive therapy, such as chronic steroid treatment or chemotherapy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Obese persons</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Older persons</b></li> <li>• <b>Persons with chronic conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cardiac conditions (hypertension &amp; cardiovascular disease)</li> <li>- chronic neurological disorders, including stroke, chronic lung disease (e.g., COPD)</li> <li>- diabetes</li> <li>- chronic kidney disease</li> <li>- some immunosuppressed conditions (e.g., cancer)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Obese persons</b></li> <li>• <b>Persons who smoke</b></li> </ul>

Source: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Influenza-readiness-COVID-19-2020.1>

## Considerations to prevent infections of seasonal influenza in the context of COVID-19



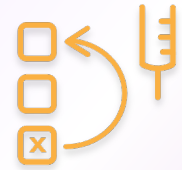
**Continue to promote personal measures** to prevent transmission of both influenza and COVID-19



**Begin planning procurement of influenza vaccines** for the upcoming influenza season

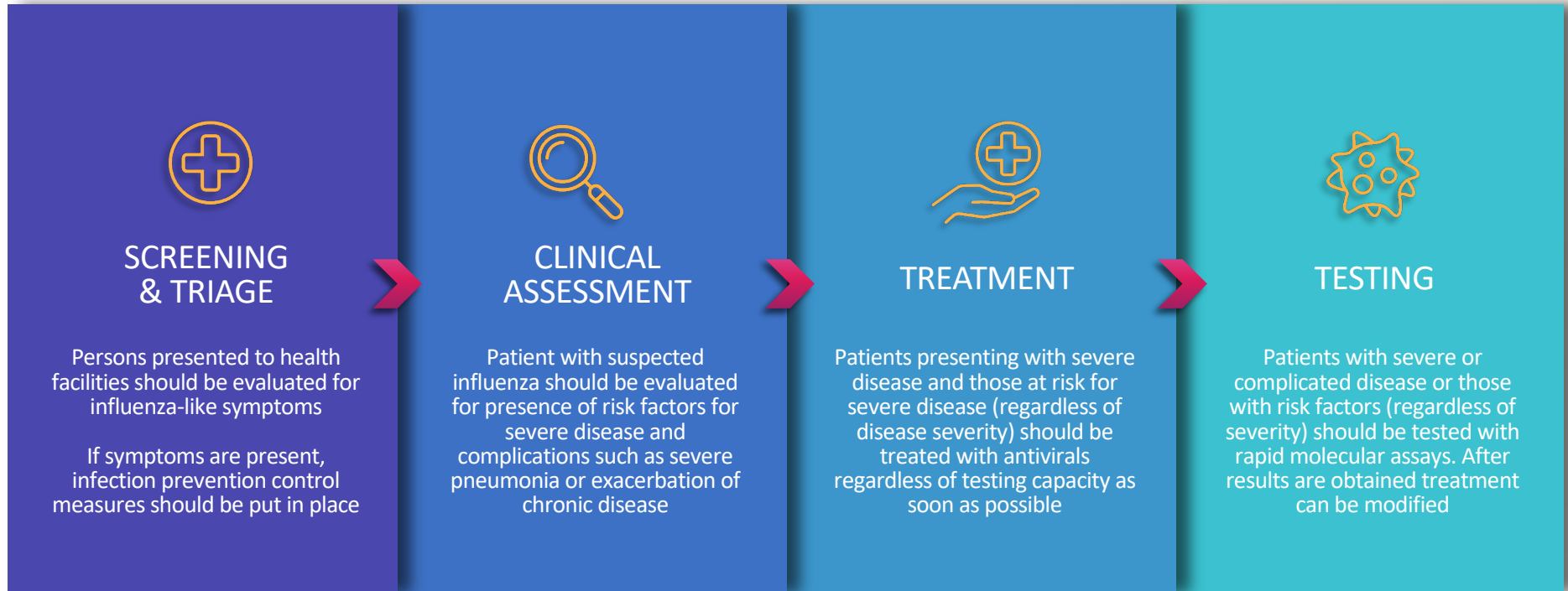


**Maintain routine influenza vaccination programmes**

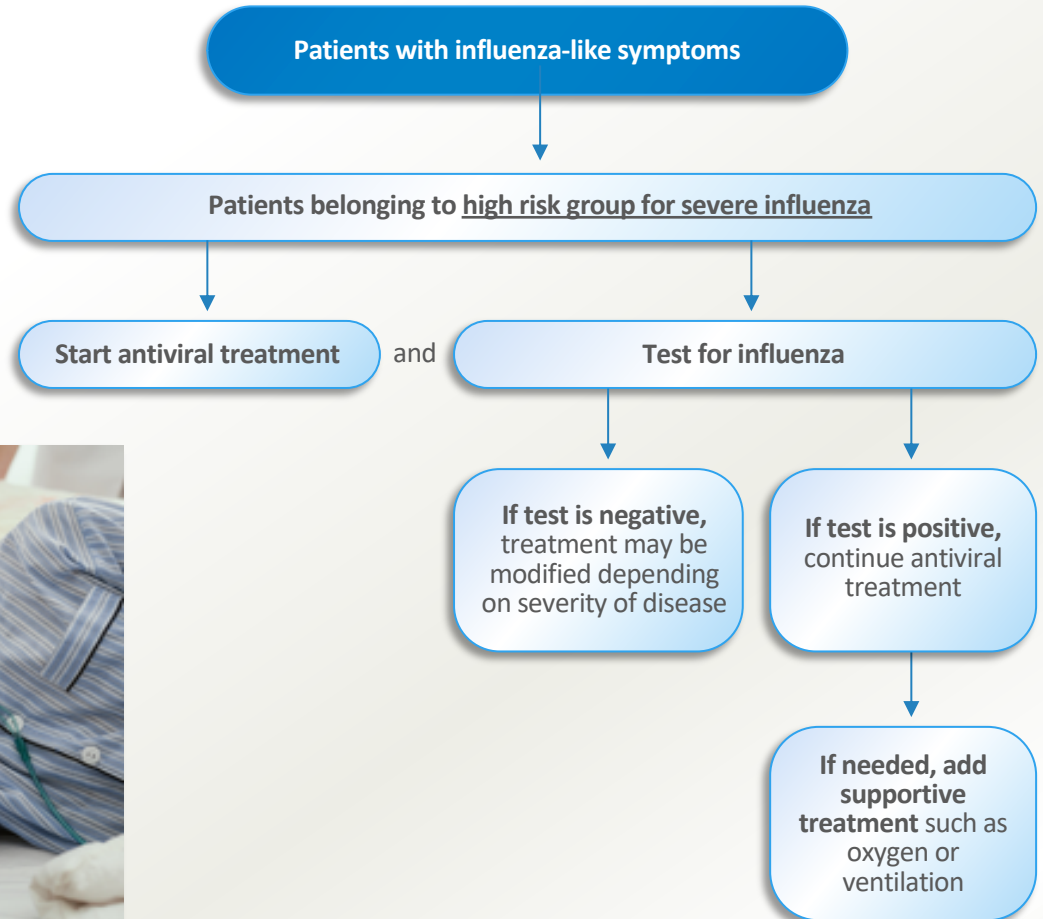


**Consider prioritization of risk groups** where vaccine supply is limited

## Clinical pathway for patients presenting with influenza-like symptoms



## Clinical pathway of at risk patients with suspected influenza



## Considerations to prepare for clinical management of patients with influenza in the context of COVID-19



### Training

**Train health workers and laboratory personnel** on clinical management and infection, prevention and control measures

**Identify surge staff;** including clinicians, nurses, respiratory technicians, etc.



### Structural

**Ensure facilities are ready to surge care areas** to manage severe and critically ill patients including screening areas, emergency areas, and intensive care.

**Include planning for maintaining essential health services.**



### Supply

**Ensure sufficient supplies** of diagnostics, personnel protective equipment, antivirals and oxygen and other essential medicines and advanced respiratory support devices to provide critical care.



### System/referral

**Ensure that integrated screening and referral systems** for both COVID-19 and influenza are in place for rapid diagnosis, prevention of transmission and treatment

**Set up clear care pathways at all levels of health systems.**

## How to differentiate between influenza and COVID-19



People of all ages who experience severe symptoms such as:



- fever and/or cough associated with difficulty breathing,
- shortness of breath,
- chest pain or pressure, or
- loss of speech or movement

**should seek medical care immediately**

- Both influenza and COVID-19 are respiratory diseases with similar modes of transmission
- The two infections often have similar symptoms, with the exception of loss of taste and smell; which seems more specific to COVID-19
- **Only testing can differentiate between influenza and COVID-19**



## WHO & global influenza surveillance

- The Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) is used to conduct global influenza surveillance<sup>1</sup>
- Since COVID-19 emerged, GISRS has supported the response through the detection of COVID-19 cases<sup>2,3,4</sup> in addition to other COVID-19 surveillance and control activities<sup>5</sup>.
- National Influenza Centres (NICs) should remain vigilant for novel influenza viruses with pandemic potential and seasonal influenza virus variants

**The Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) is a WHO-coordinated network of over 155 institutions in 122 Member States.**

### **GISRS actively:**

- monitors influenza activity globally
- recommends seasonal influenza vaccine compositions twice a year for the Northern and Southern hemisphere influenza seasons

<sup>1</sup> [Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Preparing GISRS for the upcoming influenza seasons during the COVID-19 pandemic – practical considerations](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>

<sup>4</sup> [Operational considerations for COVID-19 surveillance using GISRS](#)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>

## Considerations to ensure continued monitoring & surveillance of influenza in the context of COVID-19

## MONITOR



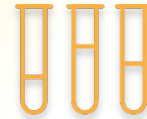
**Maintain routine sentinel surveillance** of diseases caused by respiratory pathogens, such as influenza

## MONITOR



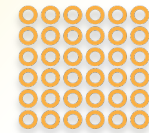
**Maintain timely and routine reporting** of influenza data to global or regional platforms

## MONITOR



**Continue COVID-19 surveillance strategies** and ensure samples for influenza testing are sent to National Influenza Centres (NICs)

## TEST



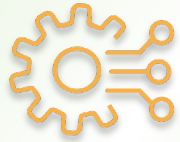
**Prioritize sampling and testing** and use multiplex testing for influenza and COVID-19 in sentinel surveillance sites, where possible

# Transparent communication & infodemic management

- Develop and adapt communication materials to inform individuals of the differences and similarities between influenza and COVID-19, how to protect themselves and when to seek care
- Timely, regular and transparent communication is important to build trust within communities
- Mis- and dis-information is often rapidly spread through social media. Several techniques can be employed to manage the infodemic:
  - **Employ social listening methods** (e.g., community feedback, frequently asked questions from healthcare systems and hotlines, and social media rumour tracking) to shape timely and tested health information
  - **Engage communities** to address pandemic fatigue
  - **Use trusted sources** to disseminate and amplify messaging



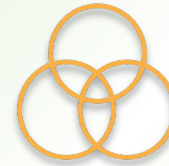
## Considerations on how to communicate and to engage with the public



**Have a communication plan ready** to accompany influenza vaccination programmes during COVID-19



**Communicate regularly and transparently** on the situation and on social and safety measures



**Develop and adapt communication materials** to inform about the differences and similarities between influenza and COVID-19; how to protect themselves; as well as when and where to seek care



**Employ social listening methods** such as community feedback and social media rumour tracking

**Recommend trusted sources** to disseminate and amplify messaging

# WHO resources on influenza during COVID-19

- [Readiness for influenza during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)  
The policy brief provides a concise summary of information and considerations to ensure optimal management of influenza during the COVID-19 pandemic  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Influenza-readiness-COVID-19-2020.1>
- [Operational considerations for COVID-19 surveillance using GISRS](#)  
This document is intended for Ministry of Health and other government officials responsible for COVID-19 and influenza surveillance and summarizes the operational considerations for leveraging influenza surveillance systems to incorporate COVID-19 testing  
[https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331589/WHO-2019-nCoV-Leveraging\\_GISRS-2020.1-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331589/WHO-2019-nCoV-Leveraging_GISRS-2020.1-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- [Preparing GISRS for the upcoming influenza seasons during the COVID-19 pandemic – practical considerations](#)  
[https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332198/WHO-2019-nCoV-Preparing\\_GISRS-2020.1-eng.pdf?ua=1](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332198/WHO-2019-nCoV-Preparing_GISRS-2020.1-eng.pdf?ua=1)
- [Public health surveillance for COVID-19: interim guidance](#)  
A summary of current WHO guidance for public health surveillance of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in humans caused by infection with SARS-CoV-2  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-2019-nCoV-surveillanceguidance-2020.7>
- [Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System](#)  
[https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs\\_laboratory/en/](https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/en/)
- [Overview of Public Health and Social Measures in the context of COVID-19](#)  
The document is intended to inform national and local health authorities and other decision-makers at all levels  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/overview-of-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19>
- [Vaccines against influenza](#)  
This position paper is concerned mainly with vaccines and vaccination against seasonal (epidemic) influenza  
[https://www.who.int/immunization/position\\_papers/PP\\_influenza\\_november2012\\_summary.pdf](https://www.who.int/immunization/position_papers/PP_influenza_november2012_summary.pdf)
- [WHO SAGE Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Recommendations during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)  
Interim recommendations from the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization for influenza vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic  
[https://www.who.int/immunization/policy/position\\_papers/Interim\\_SAGE\\_influenza\\_vaccination\\_recommendations.pdf?ua=1](https://www.who.int/immunization/policy/position_papers/Interim_SAGE_influenza_vaccination_recommendations.pdf?ua=1)
- [Considerations for implementing and adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19](#)  
An interim guidance  
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/considerations-in-adjusting-public-health-and-social-measures-in-the-context-of-covid-19-interim-guidance>

# How to protect ourselves & others

## 9 important COVID-19 prevention measures



**01 Stay home and self-isolate** if you feel unwell, even with mild symptoms



**02 Clean hands frequently** with soap & water for 40 seconds or with alcohol-based hand rub



**03 Cover your nose and mouth** with a disposable tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze



**04 Avoid touching** your eyes, nose and mouth



**05 Maintain a minimum physical distance of at least 1 metre** from others



**06 Stay away from crowds** and avoid poorly ventilated indoor spaces



**07 Use a fabric mask** where physical distancing of at least 1 metre is not possible



**08 Use a medical / surgical mask** if you may be at higher risk (age, medical conditions)



**09 Regularly clean & disinfect** frequently touched surfaces

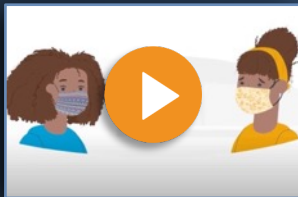
# WHO guidance on COVID-19

## VIDEO RESOURCES

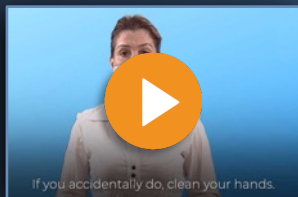
### Masks



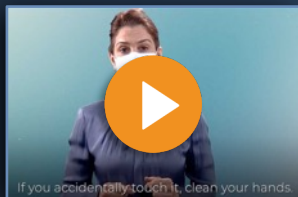
[Medical and fabric masks: who wears what when?](#)



[How to wear a fabric mask safely](#)

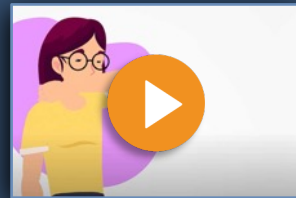


[How to wear a fabric mask](#)



[How to wear a medical mask](#)

### Transmission



[How to break the chains of transmission](#)

### Protecting ourselves



[How to protect yourself against COVID-19](#)



[Seven steps to prevent the spread of the virus](#)

# Call for poster submissions

Third WHO Conference on Infodemic Management – A whole-of-society approach

30 Nov – 11 Dec 2020

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:**

**20 November 2020**

Submit your digital poster about country experience in mitigating the COVID-19 infodemic.

Selected posters will be accepted and summarized as part of the conference proceedings.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



*Sharing your country's experience in infodemic management can help improve other countries' strategies.*

**More information, including a poster template at**  
<http://bit.ly/WHOposter>





**EPI**•WIN

**infodemic**  
MANAGEMENT

[www.who.int/epi-win](http://www.who.int/epi-win)