

PFT COVID Update 10-21-20- Surging Numbers - 1918 Flu Outbreak - PA App Update - Covid-V-Flu - Links

CORONAVIRUS



Updates

Covid Cases Surging Nationwide

With summer giving way to fall and an increased probability of indoor gatherings and events, coronavirus cases nationwide have risen to levels not seen since April. Fortunately, the climbing case count has not yet translated to increased deaths; though tragically, about 700 people are currently dying from COVID-19, on average, each day.

For a comprehensive look at the battle against COVID-19 nationwide, [click here to read this article from Consumer Health Day.](#)

1918 "Spanish Flu" In Pittsburgh

An entire century has passed since the devastating 1918 flu outbreak that took over 50 million lives worldwide—including 675,000 Americans. And while so much has changed about how we understand and combat viruses, there are sobering comparisons between then and now that cannot be ignored.

[Click here to view a comprehensive *Post-Gazette Interactive story*](#) about the 1918 flu epidemic in Pittsburgh—a city that led the nation in death rates during this horrific outbreak. Then, like now, the response was uneven, frantic, tragic and complicated by the divergent poles of public health interest and private business/political considerations.

The global pandemic lasted for two years--however a significant number of deaths were packed into three especially cruel months in the fall of 1918.

We are currently 8 months into the global coronavirus pandemic.

PA COVID Alert App Approaches 300K Downloads

People who download the PA contact tracing app receive automatic notifications about potential coronavirus exposures, but it will only work for app users who have been in close contact with other app users who have tested positive and reported the result. The app succeeds or fails based on the number of people who use it. Developers insist your identity and personal information are not an integral part of the information being shared by the application:

Things to remember:

- The app detects if users are in close contact with another app user, using Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology. It is the same technology that your phone uses to connect to wireless headphones or your car.
- The app does not use GPS, location services, or any movement or geographical information.
- The app will never collect, transmit, or store your personal information and is completely anonymous.

Click [COVID Alert PA](#) to download the app from Google Play or the App Store.

Seasonal Flu Versus COVID

With fall and winter now squarely in our sights, we thought we'd reprint a previous article comparing seasonal Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19.

Both Flu and Covid are contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with [influenza viruses](#).

Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis. Flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, but there are some key differences between the two. [Click here to learn more](#).

Use the links below if you need your flu vaccination for the year—due to social distancing constraints, the PFT will not be hosting a vaccination clinic this fall.

[Downtown clinic open for flu vaccines](#)
[Article on finding flu vaccines in your area](#)

Information Links That Bear Repeating:

Below please find additional links providing helpful information you can bookmark and count on as the COVID-19 situation changes and evolves.

[AFT/AFTPA Coronavirus Resources & Updates for Members](#)

[AFT/PFT Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

-- A Negotiated, Free Benefit to Members

[Click for EAP Information Flyer](#)

[Click for Life Skills Solutions Website](#) (*login upper right*)

[National Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) Coronavirus Resources](#)

[PPS Coronavirus Resources and Links](#)

[PA Department of Health Coronavirus Resources](#)

[PA-Specific Resources from Senator Casey](#)

[Student Debt Relief Resources](#)

[Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Rumor Control](#)

[Coronavirus Testing Locations \(view interactive map mid page\)](#)



Coronavirus Self-Checker

A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care

**** PFT Coronavirus Updates Released Periodically As Needed ****

Missed an update or message? [View our archive of COVID-19 Updates here](#).

Please keep in touch—keep sharing your ideas, your questions and your concerns.

In solidarity—

Nina Esposito-Visgitis