

# Health Department sees late-season spike in flu cases

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RICHMOND, VA (WWBT) -

If you think we've seen the last of flu season, think again. Over the last two weeks, doctors say more people have been complaining of fevers aches, pains and nausea. Those symptoms have translated into missed days of school. No word on how many kids were out.

But, a Chesterfield County Schools spokesperson says because of those illnesses, it saw a spike in absences last week. However, things seem to have evened out this week.

"She was running a little bit of a fever and 45 minutes later, she was throwing up on the floor," says parent Matt Boyce. It's a story a lot of parents can relate to.

"In the last week and a half, we've been seeing an uptick in influenza. It's been pretty light since October," says Dr. Christopher Dietz of Patient First. He says this is late in the season for the flu, which typically spikes around Christmas and the first of the year. "I was expecting maybe a little bit earlier on. We've only seen about a handful of cases up until now. As of last week, we were seeing multiple cases a day," he says.

The Health Department measures data weekly. The most recent reports show a bell curve with the increase in cases from last week.

In Chesterfield, the health director says it's not just the flu that has been making kids sick. He says a stomach bug has also been going around.

"It has kind of run rampant in our neighborhood. All the kids in our neighborhood along our street have had it in the last week or two," says Boyce. His family isn't sure what hit their house, but doctors say a lot of what goes into warding off the flu can be applied to keeping your family healthy all winter long. "Wash your hands very frequently. Don't put your unwashed hands up to your face and if you're sneezing or coughing, wash your hands immediately after," he says.

Dr. Dietz says it's never too late to get a flu shot.

Flu season typically ends in April.