

Flu season off to latest start in decades

February 17 2012, By MIKE STOBBE , AP Medical Writer

(AP) -- Health officials say the flu season is finally here - the slowest start in nearly 25 years.

Until this month, there weren't enough [flu cases](#) in the U.S. to signal the start of the season. This is the latest start to a flu season since the winter of 1987-1988.

Flu season usually starts in December or January. Often, it's half over by late February. [CDC officials](#) don't know why this season was slow but it could be a combination of factors.

On Friday, CDC officials said one state - California - has had widespread cases for the last two weeks, and Missouri has seen a spike in reports of flu-like illness.

So far the flu vaccine seems well-matched to the strains making people sick. Last [flu season](#) was considered average.

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