

# French hospitals overwhelmed by flu epidemic

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French hospitals are being stretched to their limits by a major flu epidemic sweeping the country, France's health authorities warn.

Thousands of mostly elderly people have been admitted due to a winter outbreak of a [virulent strain](#) of the virus known as H3N2.

Health Minister Marisol Touraine told hospital directors Tuesday that the latest figures showed a "worrying" situation with the epidemic yet to reach its peak.

This winter's virus is a cousin of a flu that contributed to 18,000 deaths two years ago, public [health authorities](#) say.

At the weekend, the health ministry ordered a probe into the deaths of 13 residents of a nursing home in the eastern city of Lyon late last month.

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