

Disparities in influenza outcomes

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Influenza infections kill between 3,000 and 49,000 people each year in the United States. Understanding risk factors for severe influenza outcomes, such as hospitalization, can help guide vaccination programs and reduce disease burden.

Rameela Chandrasekhar, Ph.D., and colleagues evaluated whether neighborhood determinants – represented by census tract data – contribute to the risk of [influenza](#) hospitalization. They analyzed 33,515 laboratory-confirmed influenza hospitalizations from 14 sites over a 5-year period and found that both individual (age, race, ethnicity) and census tract-based factors were associated with hospitalization for influenza.

The odds of being hospitalized were higher for census tracts with the highest levels of poverty, [household crowding](#) and female head of household. Overall, the investigators found that census tract-based determinants account for 11 percent of the variability in influenza hospitalization.

The findings, reported in *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses*, suggest that individual interventions, such as vaccinations, could be prioritized to high risk census tracts to reduce disparities in severe influenza outcomes.

More information: Rameela Chandrasekhar et al. Social determinants of influenza hospitalization in the United States, *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/irv.12483](https://doi.org/10.1111/irv.12483)

Provided by Vanderbilt University

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