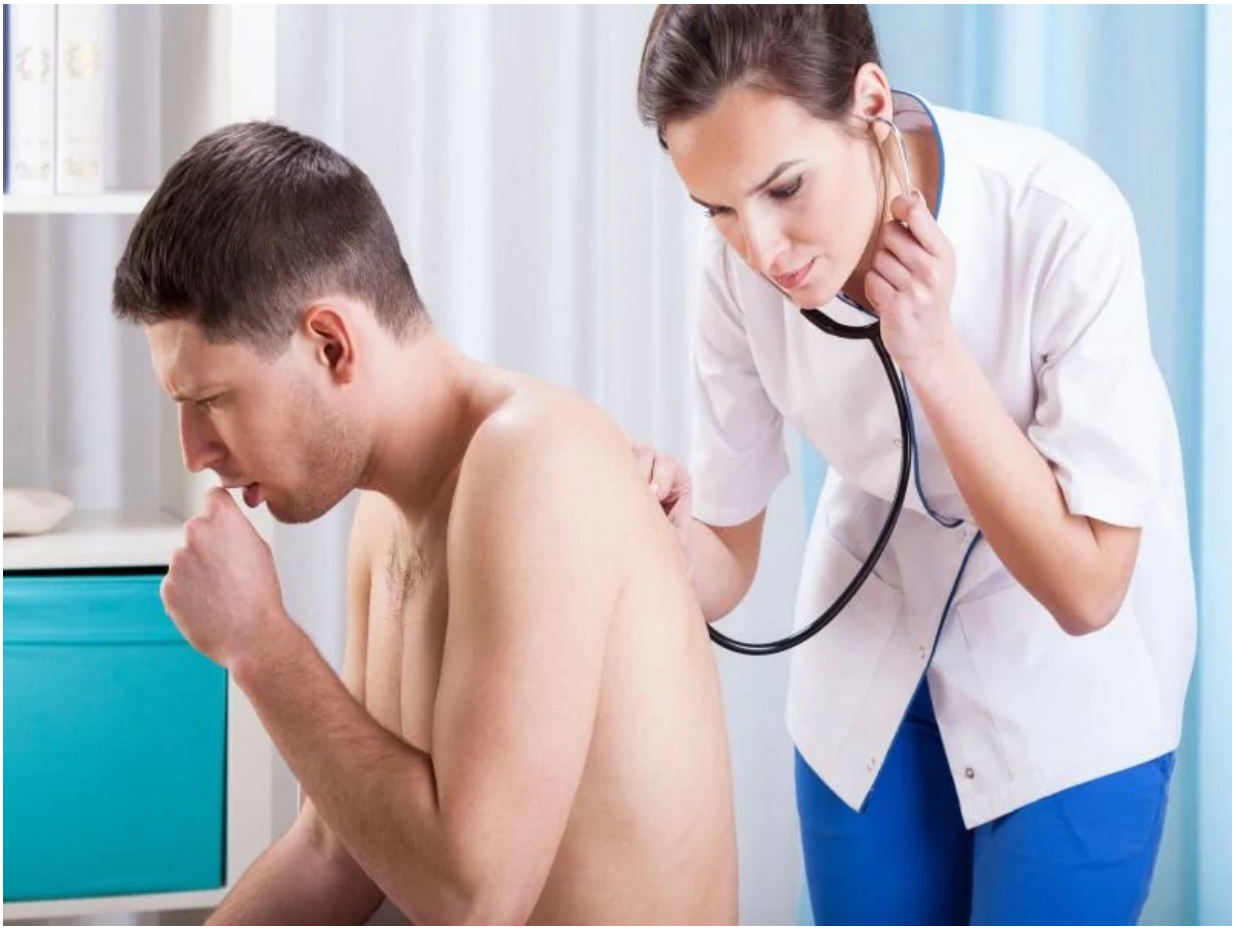
Flu activity low in Southern Hemisphere in June to August 2020

September 18 2020



(HealthDay)—There was very low influenza activity during June to

August 2020 in the Southern Hemisphere, according to research published in the Sept. 18 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Sonja J. Olsen, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues note that by mid to late February 2020, indicators of influenza activity began to decline in the Northern Hemisphere, partly due to widespread implementation of measures to mitigate transmission of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. The authors examined influenza activity in the Southern Hemisphere during June to August 2020 using data reported to the World Health Organization FluNet platform for Australia, Chile, and South Africa.

The researchers found very low influenza activity during June to August 2020. During the upcoming 2020 to 2021 Northern Hemisphere influenza season, in countries or jurisdictions where extensive community mitigation measures are maintained, such as face masks, social distancing, school closures, and teleworking, little influenza circulation is anticipated.

"If extensive community mitigation measures continue throughout the fall, influenza activity in the United States might remain low and the season might be blunted or delayed," the authors write. "However, in light of the novelty of the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty of continued community mitigation measures, it is important to plan for seasonal influenza circulation this fall and winter."

More information: Abstract/Full Text

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