An additional 17 children have died from flu, but overall activity is decreasing, according to federal health officials.

"It looks like national flu activity peaked in early February, but where we're at now is the same as the peak for last season," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) spokeswoman Kristen Nordlundsaid via email.

About 5% of visits to outpatient clinics and emergency departments were due to flu during the week ending Feb. 24, down from 6.4% the week before, according to data from the CDC. Flu activity is considered high in 32 states and widespread in 45 states.

A total of 114 children have died from flu this season. In other seasons, pediatric deaths have ranged from 37 to 171 and reached 358 during the 2009 pandemic.

About 82 of every 100,000 people have been hospitalized for flu, a cumulative rate that continues to rise. Children ages 4 years and under have been hospitalized at a rate of 58 per 100,000, while children ages 5-17 have been hospitalized at a rate of 16 per 100,000. Just under half of the children hospitalized for flu had an underlying condition among those whose previous health was known.

The CDC continues to encourage everyone 6 months and older to be vaccinated. This year's vaccine is estimated to reduce the need to see a doctor for flu by 36% and is even more effective for young children.

"It's likely we still have many more weeks of flu season left to go and so it's still not too late to get vaccinated, as well as take everyday precautions like staying home when you're sick, covering your cough and taking antiviral medications if your doctor prescribes them," Nordlund said.

**Resources**

- AAP policy "Recommendations for Prevention and Control of Influenza in Children, 2017-2018."
- Information from the CDC about flu
- Information for parents on flu vaccine from HealthyChildren.org
- AAP News stories on flu
- Pediatrics seasonal flu article collection