

**Red Flag Warning**

from TUE 1:00 PM MST until TUE 7:00 PM MST, Eastern Pima-Southeastern Pinal-Santa Cruz-Western Cochise, Southern Graham-Central and Eastern Cochise-^  
Southern Greenlee-Lower Elevations of the San Carlos Apache Nation in Graham County

# It's difficult to compare flu and COVID-19 deaths, doctors say

By Matt Galka | Published January 5 | Coronavirus in Arizona | FOX 10 Phoenix



**PHOENIX** - Over the last year, flu cases are noticeably down compared to years past. There are nearly 4,500 fewer cases in Maricopa county compared to the same time last year.

This comes as [COVID-19](#) numbers continue to increase in the county, [state](#) and nation.

Doctors say the flu never got a chance to get up and running, but many continue to compare the virus's death toll with the flu's. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows why it's difficult to compare the two infectious diseases.

Flu numbers from the CDC for the past nine years in America show the flu killed especially high numbers of Americans in 2012, 2014 and 2017, where anywhere from 40,000 to 61,000 people died.

## **RELATED: [Arizona reports record deaths, leads nation in new case rate](#)**

The other years from 2010 until now saw anywhere from 12,000 to 38,000 people die per year.

All of those seasons combined don't add up to the number of people estimated to have died from COVID-19 in the country. So far, there are more than 345,000 deaths in the US.

"It's just lack of information. People still say it's safe, it's not a big deal. It's not true," says Arizona Medical Association President, Dr. Ross Goldberg.

Anyone still comparing the virus to the flu is "severely misinformed, he says, adding, "Flu is not a walk in the park, either, people do die from it. But we've found with COVID, the death rate has increased. People say, 'It's only 1 or 2%, what's the big deal with that?' Well, I'll put it in this perspective. If I gave you 100 pieces of candy and said one or two could kill you, would you eat the candy?"

So why are the flu numbers down? Doctors say new flu strains can start somewhere else and with travel down, it's tougher for a virus to spread.

## **In order to protect yourself from a possible infection, the [CDC](#) recommends:**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Monitor your health daily