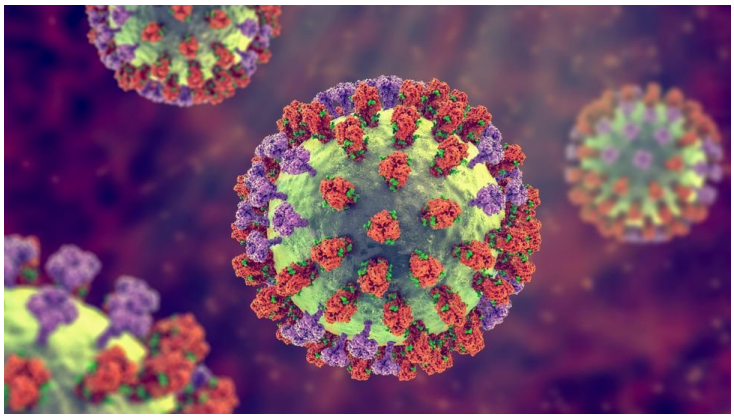
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Researchers in New Zealand win $8.3 M grant to prevent influenza

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Approximately one in five New Zealanders experience a respiratory illness, making it the third leading cause of death in the country



New Zealand-based University of Auckland-led project plans to develop a tool to predict the risk and mitigate the effect of flu and other respiratory illness.

Every year, influenza kills around 500 New Zealanders and causes misery and income loss for many more, which is why a research programme has been granted $8.3 million for the next three years.

The tool would help individuals, clinicians, communities and policymakers put steps in place to reduce the risk of illness and prevent outbreaks of respiratory illnesses.

Called the ‘Flu and other respiratory infections: Risk, Resilience and Response (Triple R) programme,’ this newly funded three-year project will particularly focus on equity outcomes for important populations, such as older people and children.

It builds on the SHIVERS (Southern Hemisphere Influenza, Vaccine Effectiveness, Research and Surveillance) programmes, which have studied the patterns of influenza and other respiratory illnesses since 2012, including during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first task will be to develop and test a ‘risk and resilience’ measure that allows individuals and families to quantify their specific risk of contracting flu and respiratory illnesses.

The second task will be to support higher-risk individuals and communities to utilise this measure and associated tools to take their own actions to reduce the impact of respiratory illness.