



Early warning for flu

SUMMER is barely over, but experts are already flagging the possibility of a bad flu season this year.

Children under five are most likely to be hit hard by influenza, according to the Influenza Specialist Group.

Dr Jim Buttery, of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the Royal Children's Hospital, said while flu was a common illness, it could become serious for some.

He said around 1500 children under five were admitted to hospital with influenza in Australia each year.

Dr Buttery said it was difficult to predict the severity of this year's flu season. "It's hard to know. We had a heavy season two years ago, and a lighter season last year," he said.

Influenza infections typically begin to increase in June and peak between July and September.