

A VARIETY OF RESPIRATORY VIRUSES CURRENTLY CIRCULATING IN LA COUNTY

Los Angeles County is currently seeing small increases in respiratory illness activity with a variety of viral causes including: influenza A; influenza B; respiratory syncytial virus (RSV); and, parainfluenza 1, 2 and 3. While the number of positive tests for influenza identified through our local surveillance has been minimal, the predominant influenza strain to date has been type B. Because nationwide new flu viral strains are the dominant strains currently circulating, prior vaccination will not provide protection—flu vaccination is very important this season. Nationwide surveillance continues to demonstrate that this year's vaccine is an excellent match to circulating strains. Vaccination should yield substantial protection against flu this year.

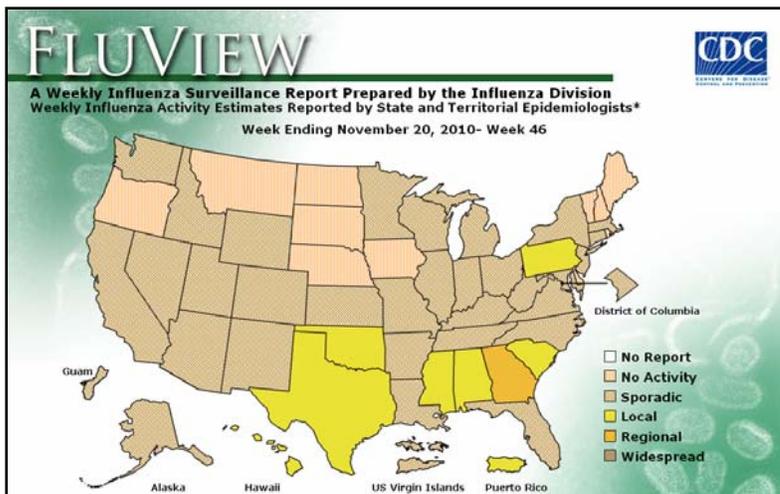
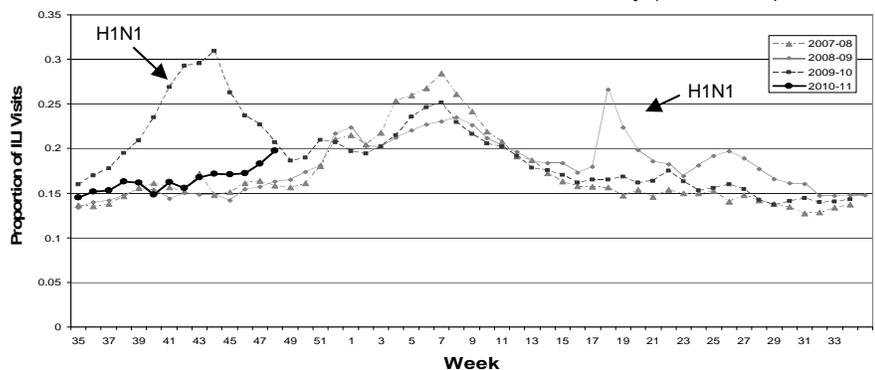
This year's flu vaccine is expected to be a good match to circulating strains.

It is important to vaccinate ALL patients without vaccine contraindications as soon as possible.

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 46	Week 47*	10-11 Season YTD*
Percent Positive Flu Tests	3.9	0.6	0.6
Percent Positive RSV Tests	7.4	9.8	2.3
Percent Flu A / B	25 / 75	100 / 0	43 / 57
Respiratory Outbreaks	2	0	2
Flu Deaths	0	0	0

* Not all labs reporting.

Influenza-like Illness ED visits in LA County (2007-2011)



FLU ACTIVITY SLOWLY INCREASING

Week 46: California continues to experience sporadic influenza activity as also seen in the District of Columbia, Guam and 30 other states. Increased "local activity" was reported by Puerto Rico and seven mostly southeastern states (Alabama, Hawaii, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Texas). The highest level of flu activity to date this season is occurring in Georgia.

VACCINATING CHILDREN AGAINST FLU BENEFITS THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

The epidemiology of influenza shows that vaccinating preschool and school-aged children against flu is one of the best methods of reducing the impact of this disease in our communities. Children, especially young children, have the highest age-specific rate of influenza infection; they are less likely to practice infection control habits (washing hands, covering sneezes and coughs); they tend to play and socialize in close proximity to one another; and when sick with flu, they tend to shed the virus longer than adults. Not surprisingly then, children are known to be the major disseminators of influenza. As shown in a recent study,* targeting influenza vaccination to this critical group provides exponential benefits to the entire population.

*Glezen, et al. 2010, JID; www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/657089

LACDPH and the CDC urge all children to be vaccinated against flu to protect both themselves and our communities from flu.

For the latest in vaccine recommendations, coverage information and patient education, visit:
www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals