INFLUENZA WATCH

Flu Surveillance and Related Disease Updates for Los Angeles County

February 21, 2013
Surveillance Week 7
Ending 2/16/13
Volume 7, Issue 9
Page 1 of 1

Influenza Decreasing in Los Angeles County

Overall respiratory illness in emergency departments has fallen (Figure 1) as has the percent positive influenza detections in laboratories across Los Angeles (Table 1, Figures 2 and 3) though RSV detections have remained stable at a high level. While there has been a decrease in influenza and respiratory activity overall, we are still in the midst of influenza season and clinicians should carefully assess patients with new or exacerbated respiratory illness for influenza. The number of reported respiratory outbreaks has slowed down but the total number of outbreaks reported thus far is more than the total reported during the 2011-2012 season. The total number of deaths has continued to rise as cases are slowly reported and confirmed. Seventy-five percent (12/16) of the confirmed deaths have occurred in those ≥65 years. CDC just released data demonstrating a low level of vaccine effectiveness this year in those >65 years and this might account for the deaths in the older population.

Figure 1: Respiratory Illness ED Visits in LA County (2007-2013)
Percent Positive Visits by MMWR Surveillance Week

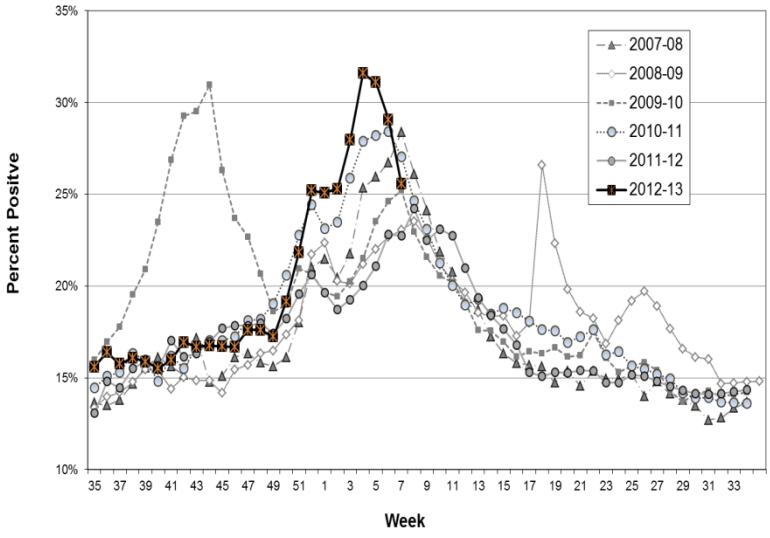


Table 1: Surveillance Summary for LA County (2012-2013)
MMWR Surveillance Week 7

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 7	2012-2013 Season YTD
Positive Flu Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	294/1610 (18.3%)	
Percent Flu A / B	70/30	
Positive RSV Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive RSV Tests)	231/1147 (20.1%)	
Respiratory Outbreaks:		
Community	3	46
Skilled Nursing Facilities	2	17
Flu Deaths, Confirmed (Pediatric Flu Deaths, Confirmed)		16 (0)

Figure 2: Respiratory Viruses in LA County (2012-2013)
Percent Positive Lab Reports by MMWR Surveillance Week

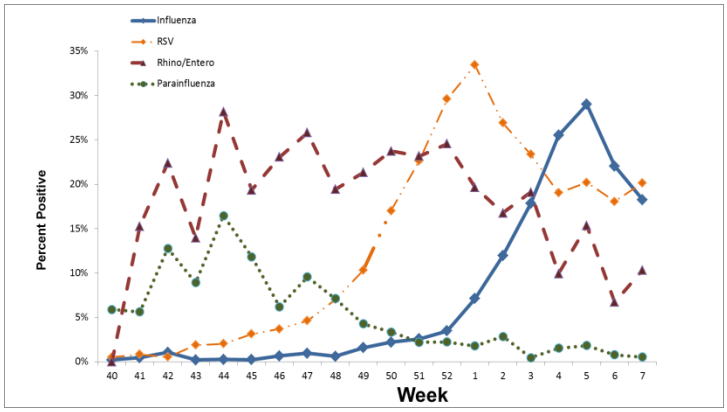
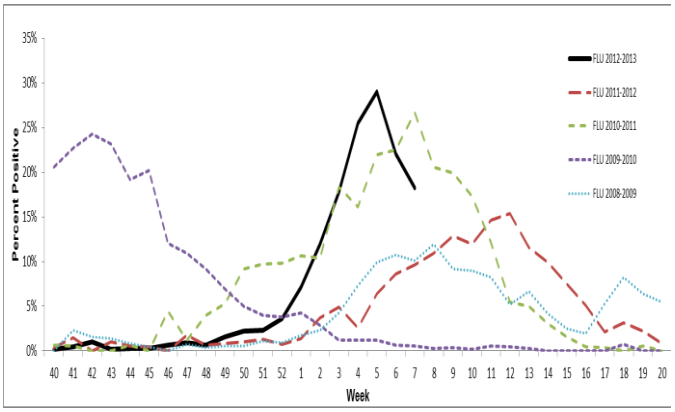


Figure 3: Influenza in LA County (2008-2013)
Percent Positive Lab Reports by MMWR Surveillance Week



The prevalence of influenza is decreasing as the prevalence of RSV has remained consistently high (≥18%) for the past 9 weeks. In past years, as influenza decreased, other viruses such as adenovirus, human metapneumovirus, and parainfluenza increased. We will report on these and other viruses as their prevalence increases.

Influenza activity at this time in 2013 is currently higher than all but 1 of the past 4 years and we expect that there will be several more weeks of significant influenza activity. As can be seen in Figure 3, influenza is commonly detected in specimens even into May (weeks 17-20).

Contact Information: fluwatch@listserv.ph.lacounty.gov
Acute Communicable Disease Control (213) 240-7941
www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd

County of Los Angeles Public Health