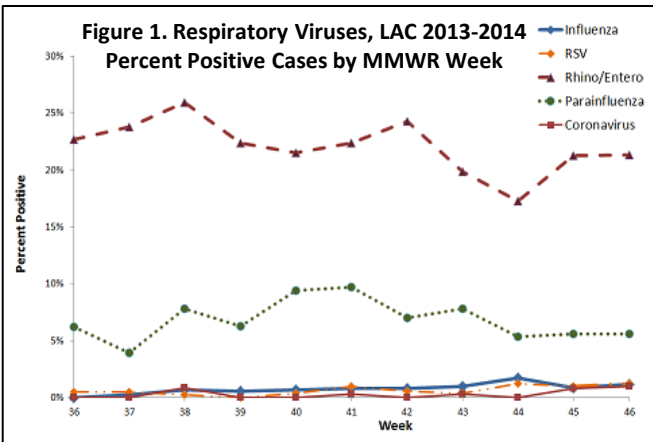


## Low Influenza Activity Typical for Fall

Influenza activity in Los Angeles County (LAC) remains low with incremental increases from week to week which is normal for this time of year. However rhinovirus, which causes symptoms of the common cold, is circulating heavily (Figure 1). To date, both flu A and B strains have been identified in LAC with type A being the dominant strain (Table 1). Both low flu activity and dominant type A reflect nationwide trends. Figure 2 shows percent positive visits for influenza like illness from participating emergency departments in LAC over the past seven influenza seasons. So far activity is following patterns seen in previous seasons with flu activity creeping along in the fall then sharply increasing from December through February. The exception to this trend was during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic that struck during atypical seasons.



## Even Healthy Children at Risk for Flu Death

A study by the CDC published in the journal *Pediatrics* found that even healthy children with no underlying medical conditions were still at risk for serious complications and even death related to influenza. The study looked at flu related deaths in children younger than 18 years old and found that many deaths occurred in healthy children as well as those who had existing medical conditions. In addition, previously healthy children were more likely to die before being admitted to a hospital than children who had a high-risk condition. Disturbingly, most of the children who had died did not receive a flu vaccination. These findings highlight the importance of vaccinating all children since the flu can quickly progress to a serious condition or even death even in those who are otherwise healthy.

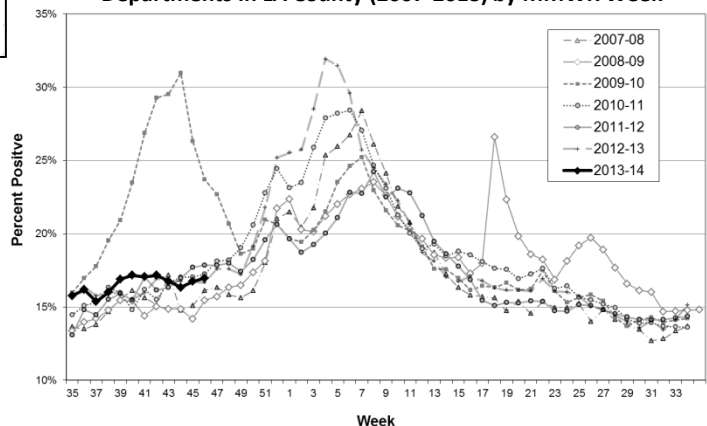
*Pediatrics*. [Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths in the United States, 2004-2012](#)

**Table 1. LA County Surveillance Summary 2013-2014**

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 46 11/10/13- 11/16/13	2013-14 YTD (9/1/13-Present)
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	8/672 (1.2%)	52/6112 (0.9%)
Percent Flu A/B	88/12	88/12
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	1
Flu Deaths, Confirmed†	0	1

†Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, compatible symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death

**Figure 2. Percent Positive Influenza Like Illness in Emergency Departments in LA County (2007-2013) by MMWR Week**



## Vaccine Matching to Circulating Flu Strains

The CDC reports that the most common circulating strain of influenza to date is type A 2009 H1N1, followed by type A H3, and lastly type B. Of the strains that were typed, all match to the components included in the current 2013-2014 vaccine. These findings should encourage those who haven't already been vaccinated to do so as the current vaccine can provide maximum protection from getting the flu.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>