

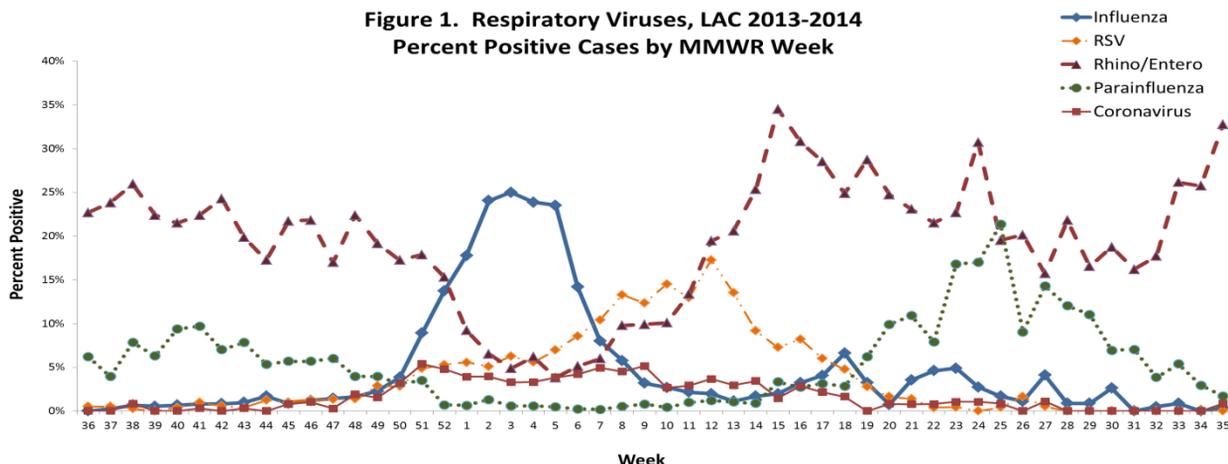
Flu Season is Right Around the Corner

This week marks the beginning of the official flu season. Although Los Angeles County (LAC) has not seen an increase in flu activity recently, flu does circulate year round as positive flu tests were seen throughout the summer. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health would like to encourage everyone 6 months of age or older to get their flu vaccines before flu activity increases as immunity can take up to 2 weeks to develop. An additional reminder for healthcare facilities is that the Health Officer order requiring all healthcare workers receive the flu vaccine that went into effect last year, applies to this flu season as well as all future flu seasons until the order is rescinded. [Health Officer Order for Annual Influenza Vaccination Programs for Healthcare Personnel](#)

Currently, the “hot topic” surrounding respiratory disease surveillance has been enterovirus D68 (EV-D68), which was identified in two pediatric clusters of respiratory illness in the Midwest this summer as well as individual cases throughout the nation. This week the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health confirmed the first case of EV-D68 detected in a Los Angeles County resident ([Press Release](#)). Enteroviruses are very common, especially during the summer and fall and cause symptoms of the common cold as seen last season in LAC (Fig 1*). More information on enteroviruses can be found here: [Department of Public Health - Acute Communicable Disease Control](#)

*Commercial laboratory testing cannot differentiate between rhinoviruses and enteroviruses

Figure 1. Respiratory Viruses, LAC 2013-2014
Percent Positive Cases by MMWR Week



2013-2014 Season Recap

- The 2013-14 influenza season was moderately severe. Flu type A H1N1 was the dominant strain and disproportionately affected younger adults.
- There were 105 (4 pediatric) confirmed influenza associated deaths in LAC, the most since the 2009 pandemic.
- Being overweight or obese was found to be a stand-alone risk factor for severe influenza outcomes such as hospitalization or death.

2014-2015 Flu Vaccine

The components of the 2014-15 flu vaccine are the same as the 2013-14 vaccine and include:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- A/Texas/50/2012/(H3N2)-like virus;
- B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus.
- B/Brisbane/60/2009-like virus (Quadrivalent nasal spray formulation only)

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended a preference for the nasal spray flu vaccine (live attenuated influenza vaccine) over the traditional flu shot (inactivated influenza vaccine) for children 2-8 years old. However, if the nasal spray is not available, vaccination should not be delayed and the traditional flu shot should be given. Flu vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older unless contraindications are identified.