

INFLUENZA WATCH

Influenza and Related Disease Updates for Los Angeles County

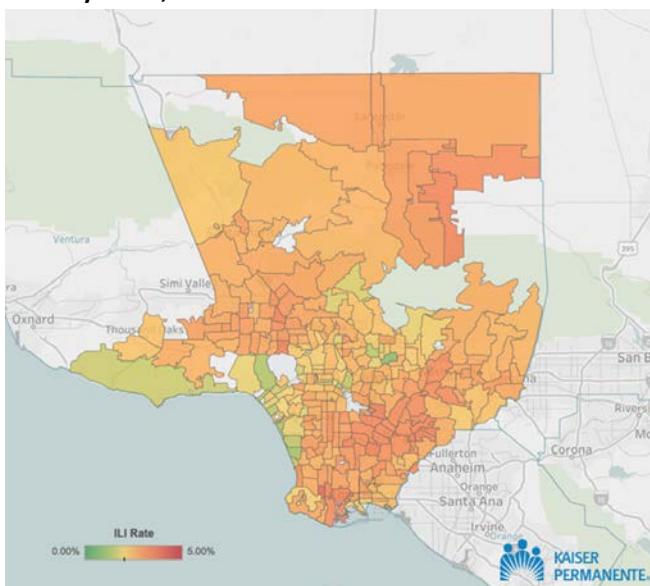
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Surveillance Week 4
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Influenza activity remains elevated and widespread throughout Los Angeles County

Although influenza activity has declined in week 4 (January 21-27, 2018) from the peak in week 2 (January 7-13, 2018), influenza activity remains near the peak seen in previous seasons. During surveillance week 4, 17.3% of respiratory specimens tested in LAC surveillance labs tested positive for influenza virus compared with 28.6% in week 2. Of the respiratory specimen testing positive for influenza in week 4, 38% percent were positive for influenza B. In many influenza seasons, a secondary wave of influenza B virus follows the initial peak of influenza A virus at the beginning of the season. This secondary wave can lengthen the season and cause additional severe disease and death. The influenza vaccine is generally more effective against influenza B virus strains. Therefore, LAC Department of Public Health (DPH) continues to recommend influenza vaccination for everyone over 6 months of age.

Since the beginning of the 2017-18 influenza season on August 27, 2017, there have been 158 influenza-associated deaths reported to LAC DPH. Nearly 85% of these deaths occurred in people 65 years of age or older. Many influenza-associated deaths are unrecognized or unreported, so the true number of influenza-associated deaths is likely much higher. There are several tools available to help prevent severe complications and death from influenza infection. Routine administration of the influenza vaccine to everyone 6 months of age and older and the use of antiviral medication in individuals at risk for severe complications can help lower the incidence of complications and influenza associated deaths. In addition, persons aged ≥ 6 years with immunocompromising conditions and all adults aged ≥ 65 years are recommended to receive the 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (Prevnar 13®). Bacterial pneumonia is a leading complication of influenza illness and Prevnar 13 can reduce the risk of acquiring secondary pneumonia. [In 2015, ACIP recommended routine vaccination with Prevnar 13® for all adults aged 65 years and older.](#)

Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) Activity Map by Zip Code Among Los Angeles County Kaiser Permanente (KP) Members for January 16-30, 2018¹

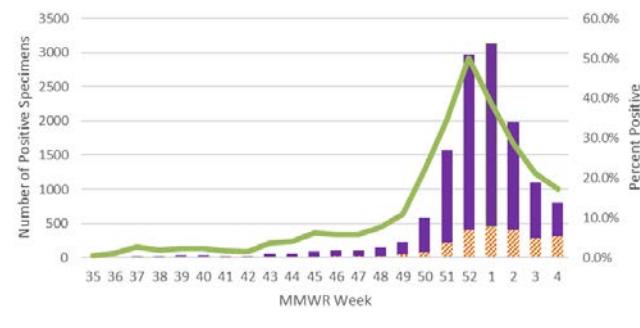


1 ILI Rate = [Number of unique KP members with ILI during 2-week period]/[Number of KP members in zip code]

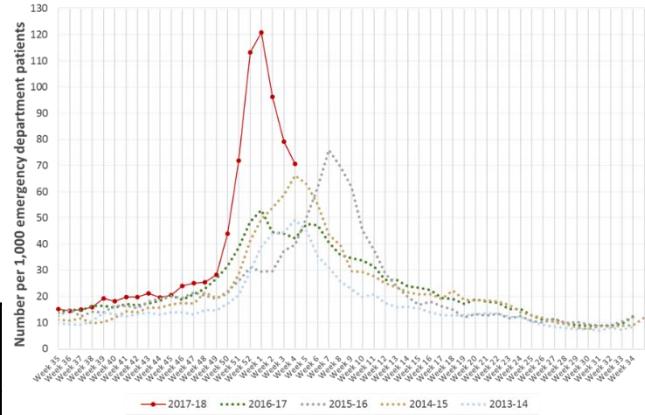
Table 1. Los Angeles County Influenza Surveillance Summary

	2017-2018		2016-2017	
	Week 4*	YTD†	Week 4	YTD
Percent Positive Flu Tests	17.3	23.1	16.3	8.36
Percent Flu A/B	62/38	82/18	98/2	98/2
Confirmed flu deaths in: Children aged <18 years		1		0
Adults aged ≥ 18 years		157		47

Figure 1. Influenza Positive Tests from Sentinel Laboratories Los Angeles County, 2017-18 Season



Proportion of Influenza-like Illness Emergency Department Visits by Week, LAC, 2013-2018



*For the 2017-2018 season, week 4 starts 1/21/2018 and ends 1/27/2018.

†The influenza surveillance year started August 27, 2017.

#Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, ILI symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death.

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