

Small increase in influenza activity seen in weeks 7 and 8, likely due to flu B

Although emergency room visits for influenza like illness have continued to decrease, other indicators suggest that influenza (flu) activity has increased in the last two weeks following a period of decline. During surveillance week 8, ending on February 24th, 16% of respiratory specimens tested at our sentinel laboratories were positive for flu compared with 10.2% in surveillance week 6. The increase in respiratory specimen testing positive for flu has been driven by an increase in flu B. Of the positive specimens, 71% were flu B in week 8 compared with 55% in week 6. This year's vaccine is more effective against flu B viruses (vaccine effectiveness: 42%) than against the H3N2 viruses (vaccine effectiveness: 25%) that predominated earlier in this flu season. We continue to urge everyone 6 months of age or older get their flu vaccine if they have not already done so because they can still benefit from flu vaccine protection.

An LA County [Health Officer Order](#) mandates that healthcare personnel working in acute and subacute care facilities either obtain an influenza vaccine or wear a face mask while in patient care areas from November 1 to March 31. Because it is not possible to predict when the flu season will end, LACDPH might extend the Order through April 15 if it seems likely that flu activity will remain elevated beyond March 31. [More information for health care workers is available at the LACDPH website.](#)

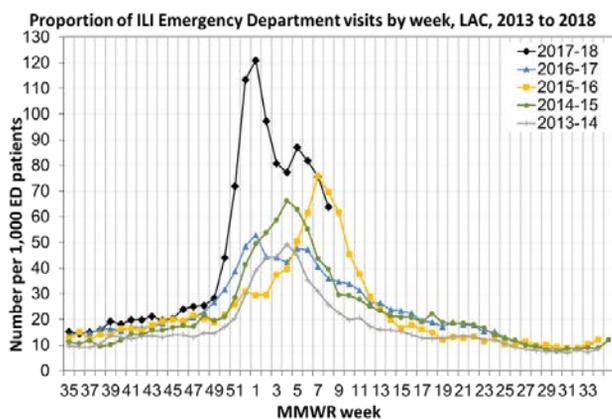
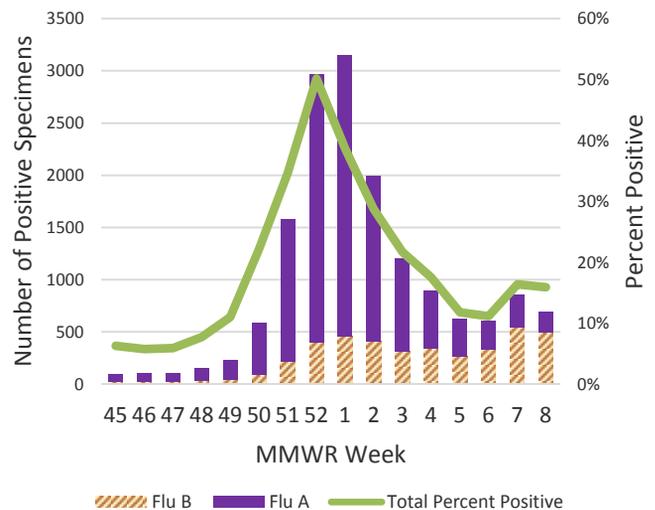
Table 1. Los Angeles County Influenza Surveillance Summary				
	2017-2018		2016-2017	
	Week 6*	YTD†	Week 6	YTD
Percent Positive Flu Tests	15.9	20.7	11.2	26.4
Percent Flu A/B	29/71	75/25	93/7	97/3
Pediatric Deaths‡		1		1
Adult Flu Deaths		205		65

*For the 2017-2018 season, week 8 starts 2/18/2018 and ends 2/24/2018.

†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.

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



Acute Communicable Disease Control Program 3/1/2018

