

Local Flu Activity: Low but Still Increasing

For the first time this season, influenza (flu) activity (13.9%) during Week 9 surpassed 10% prevalence in Los Angeles County (Table 1). Overall, flu activity continues to show small but steady increases over previous weeks, though overall respiratory illnesses seem to be declining (Figure 1). In Week 9, influenza was as prevalent as rhinovirus (14.0%) and more prevalent than human metapneumovirus (hMPV) (10.5%), yet still somewhat lower than RSV (18.2%) (Figure 2).

Table 1. LA County Surveillance Summary (2011-2012) Surveillance Week 9

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 9	2011-2012 Season YTD
Positive Flu Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	89 / 639 (13.9%)	473 / 12,172 (3.9%)
Percent Flu A / B	90 / 10	90 / 10
Positive RSV Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive RSV Tests)	89 / 490 (18.2%)	634 / 8,803 (7.2%)
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	1	12
Flu Deaths, Confirmed (Pediatric Deaths, Confirmed)	-----*	4 (1)

* Due to the lag time in reporting and confirmation of cause, weekly flu death data is delayed.

Figure 1. Influenza-like Illness ED Visits in LA County (2007-2012) Surveillance Week 9

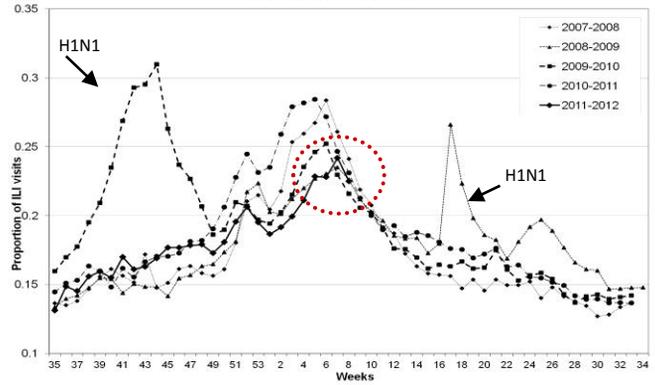
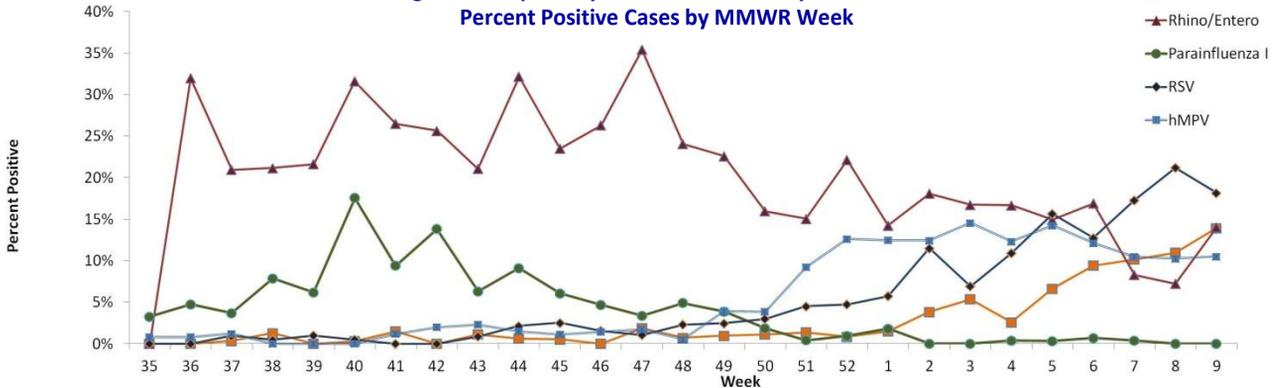


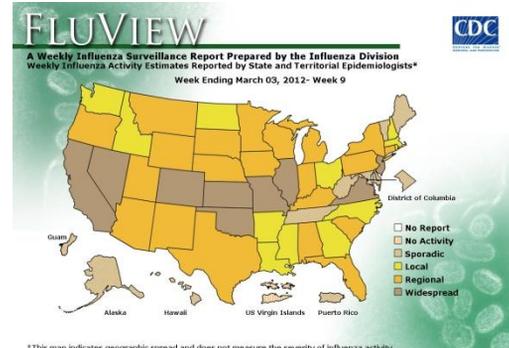
Figure 2. Respiratory Viruses in LA County 2011-2012 Percent Positive Cases by MMWR Week



Is working in healthcare a risk factor for influenza?

A recent meta-analysis published in PLoS One examined whether the incidence of influenza among healthcare workers (HCWs) is higher than that in other healthy community-dwelling adults. Included were 29 published observational studies or randomized trials reporting flu season or infection rates covering 52 years and over 58,000 participants. Influenza infection was defined as a 4-fold rise in antibody titer, positive viral culture or PCR. Pooled influenza incidence rates in HCWs were compared to those in healthy adults. For all infections, unvaccinated HCWs were 3-times as likely (with vaccinated HCWs 5-times as likely) to develop flu than healthy adults of the same vaccination status. Results of the analysis led authors to conclude that HCWs are at significantly higher risk of influenza compared to adults working in non-healthcare settings.

Abstract available at: <http://tinyurl.com/7wzodso>



* This map indicates geographic spread and does not measure the severity of influenza activity.

National tracking shows the spread of flu continuing in Week 9 with widespread influenza activity in nine states (California, Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Virginia).