

## Influenza Continues to Decrease While Other Respiratory Pathogens Rise

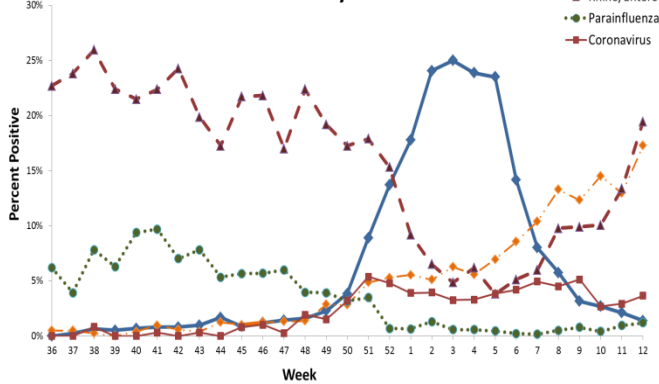
Flu activity continues to decline and has dropped to “Local” levels in California according to the CDC. Likewise, surveillance indicators in Los Angeles County show flu activity is tapering off. These markers are an average measure of activity, however and it’s important to note that influenza is still causing significant illness in individuals. As long as flu continues to circulate, there is potential for serious illness especially in those who belong to groups at high risk for influenza complications.

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

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 12 3/16/14-3/22/14	2013-14 YTD (9/1/13-Present)
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests <sup>†</sup> (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	14/1008 (1.4%)	3,757/33,899 (11.1%)
Percent Flu A/B	7/93	96/4
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	10
Influenza confirmed outbreaks <sup>††</sup>	0	2
Pediatric Flu Deaths	1	4
Adult Flu Deaths, confirmed <sup>†††</sup>	1	87
Total	2	91

<sup>†</sup>Sentinel sites (9 participating) <sup>††</sup>Associated with at least one positive influenza lab test <sup>†††</sup>Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, compatible symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death  
Note: LA County tracks flu deaths of all ages, CA State reports on those <65 years only

**Figure 1. Respiratory Viruses, LA County 2013-2014**  
Percent Positive Cases by MMWR Week



## Asymptomatic Flu Infections Common

A recent study published in the Lancet found that the majority of influenza infections were not accompanied by flu-like symptoms. Over the 6 season study period researchers found up to 75% of both seasonal and pandemic influenza infections were asymptomatic. They also found that on average 18% of unvaccinated people became infected with influenza each winter. Furthermore the study found that seasonal H3N2 (which was the dominant strain during last year’s 2012-13 season) caused more severe symptoms than the 2009 pandemic H1N1 strain which is the overwhelmingly dominant strain this current season.

[Comparative community burden and severity of seasonal and pandemic influenza: results of the Flu Watch cohort study](#)

## 2014-15 Influenza Vaccine Composition

The WHO recently released their recommendations for the 2014-2015 northern hemisphere influenza vaccine which are the same as the current 2013-2014 components:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- A/Texas/50/2012/(H3N2)-like virus;
- B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus.

The US Vaccine and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (part of the FDA) met this month and also recommended this composition for the United States. The quadrivalent vaccine will contain an additional B virus B/Brisbane/60/2009-like virus.

[Selecting Viruses for the Seasonal Influenza Vaccine](#)

**Figure 2. Percent Positive Influenza-Like-Illness in Participating LAC Emergency Departments 2007-2014**

