

Flu Continues at Lower Levels

Influenza activity in Los Angeles County (LAC) is decreasing suggesting that the peak of flu season has passed. Both percent positive laboratory tests and visits to emergency departments for influenza-like-illness have declined from the previous week (Figures 1 & 2). National data also shows an overall decline in flu activity. Despite this drop, it will likely to continue for the next several weeks. Additionally, a second wave of activity is possible. The 2009 A H1N1 remains the dominant strain, but a slight increase of flu B has been identified from our sentinel sites over the last few weeks. Vaccination is still recommended for people who have not been immunized, especially those in high risk groups.

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

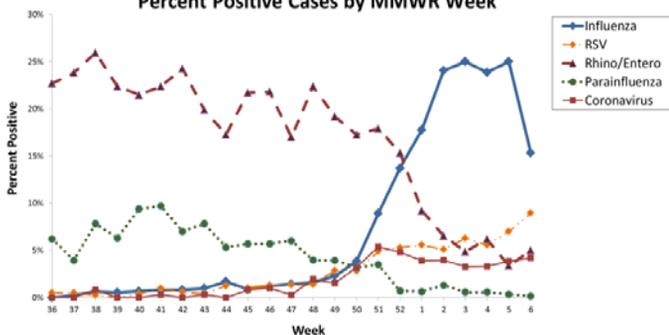


Table 1. LA County Surveillance Summary 2013-2014

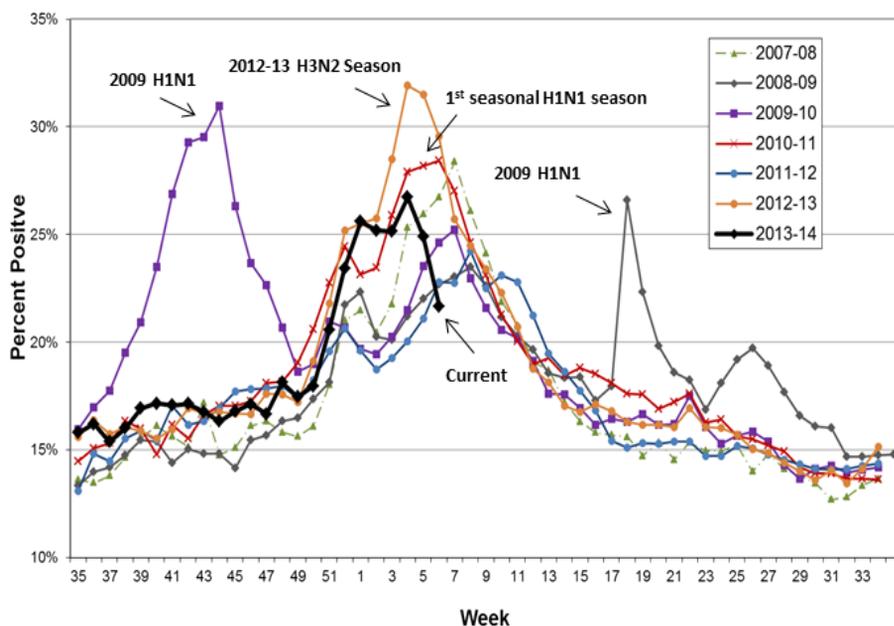
LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 6 2/2/14-2/8/14	2013-14 YTD (9/1/13-Present)
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests† (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	260/1696 (15.3%)	3302/24,158 (13.7%)
Percent Flu A/B	93/7	98/2
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	5
Influenza confirmed††	0	1
Adult Flu Deaths, confirmed†††	6	50
Pediatric Flu Deaths	0	2
Total	6	52

†Sentinel sites (9 participating) ††Associated with at least one positive lab test
†††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

Vaccinating Pregnant Women Still Important

Although influenza activity is declining, flu season is not over. Therefore it is critical that all pregnant and postpartum women get vaccinated to protect themselves against the flu to avoid serious complications to both mother and child. The CDC recommends pregnant women be vaccinated at any stage of their pregnancy as pregnant and postpartum women are more likely to have severe illness from flu compared to women who are not pregnant.¹ During the 2009 H1N1 pandemic pregnant women accounted for only 1% of the total US population yet made up 5% of the flu deaths reported to the CDC.²

Figure 2. Percent Positive Influenza Like Illness in participating LAC Emergency Departments



1. [CDC letter promoting flu vaccination of pregnant women](#)

2. [Pandemic 2009 Influenza A \(H1N1\) Virus Illness Among Pregnant Women in the United States. JAMA. 2010;303\(15\):1517-1525.](#)