

Influenza Season in Full Swing

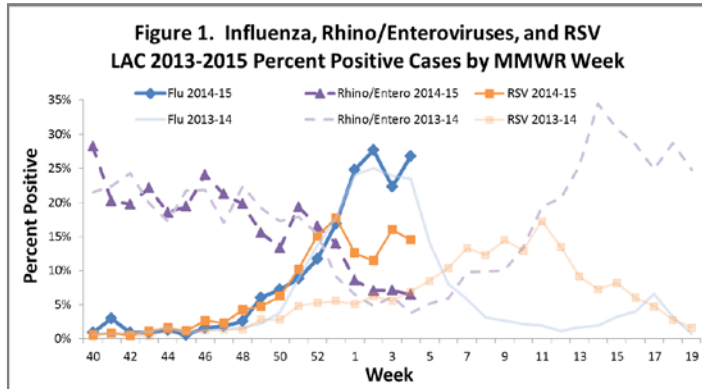
Influenza activity in Los Angeles County remains elevated, and is comparable to previous seasons (Figures 1 and 2). Increased activity is not unusual for this time of year and may continue for the next few weeks. During surveillance week 3, percent positive flu cases from sentinel laboratories decreased slightly but rose again during surveillance week 4 (Figure 1). So far this season, 21 confirmed influenza-associated deaths have been reported to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Table 1). Influenza A H3 continues to be the dominant strain both locally and nationwide. Although local flu activity is high, national reports show activity is decreasing in some states (Figure 3). In addition to widespread local flu activity, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) rates are higher than last year at this time (Figure 1).

Table 1. LA County Surveillance Summary

	2014-2015		2013-2014	
	Week 4	YTD [†]	Week 4	YTD
Percent Positive Flu Tests	26.8%	13.9%	23.5%	13.4%
Percent Flu A/B	91/9	93/7	97/3	98/2
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	3	2	5
Influenza Confirmed Outbreaks	0	3	0	2
Pediatric Flu Deaths ^{††}	0	0	0	2
Adult Flu Deaths	1	21	16	59

[†]The influenza surveillance year starts September 1

^{††}Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, ILI symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death



Algorithm for Outpatient Clinics to Evaluate Flu Calls for Early Antiviral Treatment

The CDC has created a flowchart to assist medical offices evaluate patients who call in with possible influenza. If callers report flu-like symptoms, they should be referred to clinical staff who can then evaluate if the patient is high-risk and antiviral treatment is recommended, even before an office visit. Antiviral treatment is most effective when administered within 48 hours of onset of symptoms. Last week the CDC and other health care partners issued a letter to physicians encouraging them to heighten awareness of flu and to remind them of the importance of antiviral treatment especially in young children and those 65 years and older.

[Medical Office Telephone Evaluation of Patients with Possible Influenza | Health Professionals | Seasonal Influenza \(Flu\)](#)

[Antiviral Letter to Healthcare Providers](#)

Figure 2. Respiratory Illness Emergency Department Visits, LAC 2009-2015

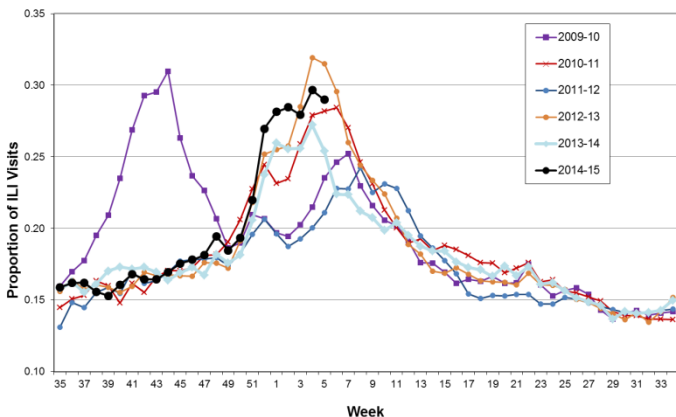
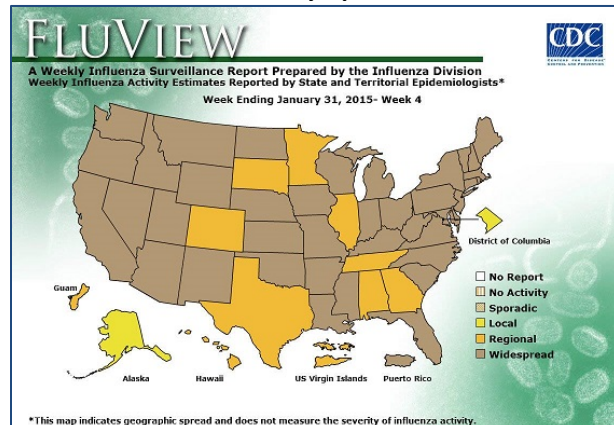


Figure 3. CDC Weekly US Map: Influenza Summary Update



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