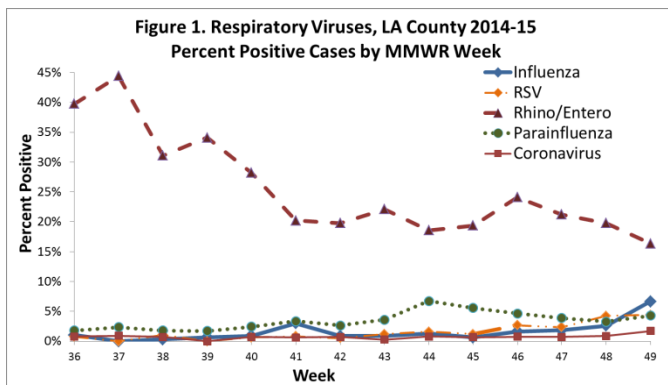


Flu Activity is Increasing

Multiple surveillance indicators show influenza activity in Los Angeles County (LAC) is increasing, a trend that is expected to continue as the season progresses (Table 1, Figures 1 & 2). Although various influenza strains have been detected in LAC, type A H3N2 is by far the dominant strain. Similarly, CDC reports show most states are also experiencing increased activity across the nation. This week is National Influenza Vaccination Week, which highlights the importance of continuing influenza vaccination during the holiday season and beyond. For more information see: [National Influenza Vaccination Week | National Influenza Vaccination Week \(NIVW\) | CDC](#)



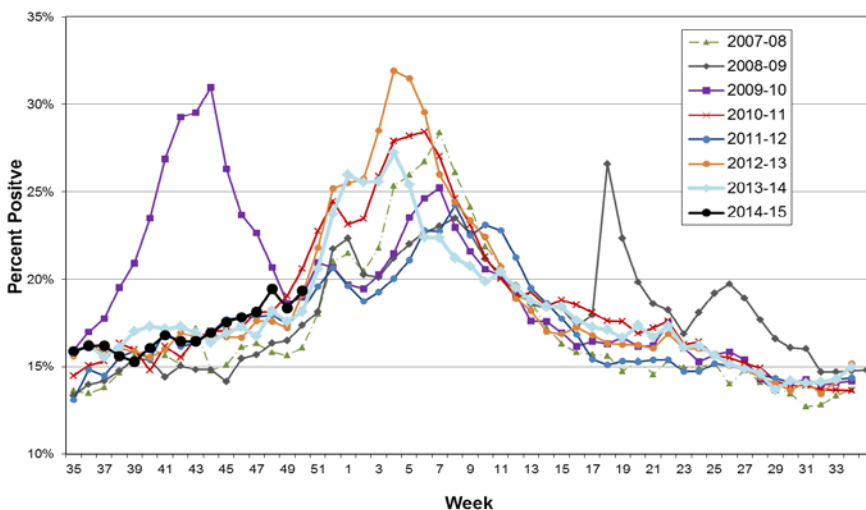
	Week 49 11/30/14-12/6/14	2014-15 YTD (9/1/14-Present)
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	50/753 (6.6%)	162/8740 (1.9%)
Percent Flu A/B	84/16	77/23
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	0
Flu Deaths, Confirmed†	0	0

†Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, compatible symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death

Potential Circulation of Drifted Influenza A H3N2 Viruses

Recently the CDC has detected significantly different (drifted) influenza A H3N2 viruses through routine influenza viral characterization surveillance. About half (52%) of H3N2 viruses tested at CDC were antigenically different from the H3N2 strain included in this season's vaccine. There are two important implications of these findings: 1) in seasons where influenza A H3N2 predominates, disease can be more severe¹; and 2) influenza vaccine effectiveness may be reduced because of decreased protection for the drifted strain. Despite the discovery of the drifted H3N2 viruses, vaccination is still encouraged and provides protection against influenza viruses that have not undergone antigenic drift, as well as possible cross protection from the drifted viruses. As an adjunct to vaccination, the CDC is emphasizing the importance of the use of antivirals for hospitalized or high risk patients to reduce the duration and severity of illness and its complications. For details please refer to the CDC Health Advisory: [HAN Archive - 00374|Health Alert Network \(HAN\)](#)

Figure 2. Percent Positive Visits to Emergency Departments for Influenza-Like-Illness, LAC 2007-2014



¹Estimates of Deaths Associated with Seasonal Influenza --- United States, 1976--2007

