



Chicago Flu Update



City of Chicago

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

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Chicago Department of Public Health

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What is the risk?

As of February 11, 2010, the risk of pandemic influenza A (H1N1) influenza infection in Chicago is low. The numbers of severe influenza infections, influenza-like illnesses, and positive influenza tests remain minimal. Due to the possibility of a recurrence of heightened activity in the coming months, all Chicagoans aged six months and older are encouraged to protect themselves from infection by getting vaccinated with the pandemic influenza vaccine. Chicagoans should ask their healthcare provider or pharmacist about vaccine availability. Dates and locations of City of Chicago pandemic vaccine clinics are available by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

One hospitalization and one death associated with pandemic influenza A (H1N1) have been reported in Chicago residents for surveillance week 5 (January 31 – February 6, 2010) (Figure 1).

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

With 17 Chicago hospitals reporting, 5.8% of emergency department visits were due to influenza-like illness (i.e. fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). Among twelve outpatient clinics reporting for the week of January 31 – February 6, 2010, 2.4% of doctor's office visits were due to influenza-like illness. This level of activity is similar to levels seen during the same surveillance week during previous influenza seasons.

Which influenza strains are circulating?

For the week of January 31 – February 6, 2010, with seven laboratories reporting, 4 out of 5 influenza A-positive specimens for which subtyping was performed were reported as confirmed or presumptive pandemic influenza A (H1N1). Additionally, one influenza B strain was reported. Throughout the first five weeks of 2010, the weekly percentage of specimens tested that were positive for influenza has remained below 3%, compared to the maximum of 36% at the end of October 2009 (Figure 2).

Where can I get more information?

[This month's edition of CDPH's CD Info newsletter](http://egov.cityofchicago.org/webportal/COCWebPortal/COC_EDITORIAL/CDInfoNewsletterFebruary.pdf)¹ provides supplemental information about the surveillance and investigation of the 2009 pandemic in Chicago.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/)² report provides national updates and trends related to the intensity of influenza activity across the United States, as well as detailed information on antiviral resistance, severity of illness, and other topics. Updates specific to [Illinois](http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate09-10.htm)³ and [Suburban Cook County](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation)⁴ are also available online.

¹ http://egov.cityofchicago.org/webportal/COCWebPortal/COC_EDITORIAL/CDInfoNewsletterFebruary.pdf

² <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>; ³ <http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate09-10.htm>; ⁴ http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation

Figure 1. Reported number of hospitalizations associated with confirmed or presumptive pandemic influenza A (H1N1), Chicago, by week of specimen collection, April 2009—February 6, 2010

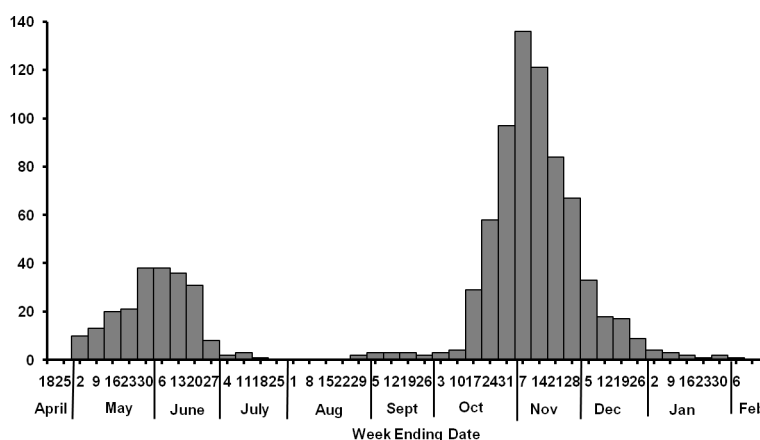


Figure 2. Influenza-positive tests reported by local laboratories serving Chicago hospitals that are equipped to identify influenza types, by week, September 2009—February 6, 2010

