



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?

This is the first *Chicago Flu Update* for the 2010-2011 influenza season. In August 2010, the WHO declared an end to the global H1N1 pandemic. However, the [Board of Health's Emergency Reporting Requirement](#)¹ is still in effect for Chicago hospitals, as well as for Chicago laboratories performing influenza subtyping tests. Currently, the risk of influenza infection is low. Vaccination is the best way to protect against influenza infection and all Chicagoans aged six months and older are encouraged to get vaccinated. Chicagoans should ask their healthcare provider or pharmacist about vaccine availability. For those without a healthcare provider or whose healthcare providers do not have the influenza vaccine, a schedule of [City of Chicago influenza vaccine clinics](#)² is available on the City website and by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

In September 2010, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) issued [new reporting requirements for influenza](#)³. Suspected novel influenza, pediatric influenza-associated deaths, influenza-associated ICU hospitalizations and outbreaks of influenza-like illness in a congregate setting should all be reported to CDPH via [INEDSS](#)⁴. Since the revised case reporting requirements were issued, CDPH has not received any reports of these types of influenza cases. (Notably, for reporting purposes, the 2009 H1N1 strain is no longer considered novel influenza.)

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

All hospitals in Chicago that provide emergent care are required to report on a weekly basis the total number of emergency room visits, and of those visits, the number with influenza-like illness (ILI) (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). For the week of October 3 - 9, 2010, with 14 hospitals reporting, 2.2% of emergency room visits were due to ILI. Figure 1 shows Chicago emergency department ILI activity for 2010. Several outpatient clinics throughout Chicago also report on the number of ILI patients seen weekly. From October 3 - 9, 2010, with four outpatient clinics reporting, <1% of doctor's office visits were due to influenza-like illness.

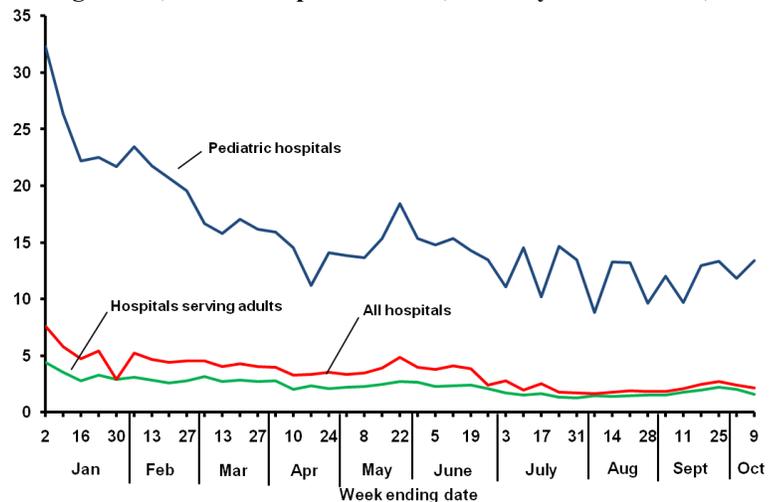
Which influenza strains are circulating?

Data on influenza virus test results are reported by Chicago laboratories performing influenza subtyping. For the week of October 3 - 9, 2010, with six laboratories reporting, no specimens tested for influenza were positive.

Where can I get more information?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](#)⁵ 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](#)⁶ and [Suburban Cook County](#)⁷ are also available online.

Figure 1. Weekly reported percent of emergency department visits attributed to influenza-like illness in two pediatric hospitals, hospitals serving adults, and all hospitals overall, January 2– October 9, 2010



¹ https://www.chicagohan.org/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=28960&folderId=24345&name=DLFE-95.pdf; ² http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/supp_info/h1n1/cdph_flu_shot_sitesacrosschicago.html; ³ https://www.chicagohan.org/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=28960&folderId=24344&name=DLFE-144.pdf; ⁴ <https://www.idphnet.net>; ⁵ <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>; ⁶ <http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate09-10.htm>; ⁷ http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation