



Chicago Flu Update



City of Chicago

Chicago Department of Public Health

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

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What is the risk?

The risk of influenza infection in Chicago is decreasing. Locally, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza A has decreased by nearly thirteen percentage points from its peak reported in January. However, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza B has increased, from 41% of positive influenza specimens tested in week 9 to 44% in week 10. Fifty-six percent of typed influenza strains locally were A; both H3N2 and H1N1 subtypes are circulating. Since October 2010, 12% of all reported influenza-associated intensive care (ICU) hospitalizations have been positive for influenza B; 33% have been positive for H1N1, 15% for H3N2, and 40% were not subtyped. Vaccine is available in doctor's offices, retail pharmacies, CDPH Neighborhood Health Centers, and immunization walk-in clinics. A list of CDPH clinics is available on the [City of Chicago website](http://www.cityofchicago.org)¹ and by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

The second pediatric death of this influenza season has been reported.² This brings the total number of deaths reported this season to 14: 10 in ICU patients and 4 in non-ICU patients; the average age is 64 years. Eighty-eight influenza-associated ICU admissions of Chicago residents have been reported to CDPH (Figure 1). Of these, 7 occurred in patients whose influenza-positive specimens were collected during surveillance week 10 (March 6-12, 2011). Twenty (23%) of the reported ICU hospitalizations have been for pediatric patients including two pediatric deaths. The racial/ethnic distribution to date is 38% Black, 26% White, 22% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 9% not reported or other. Two deaths were reported for week 10.

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

For the week of March 6-12, 2011, with 16 hospitals reporting, 5.0% of emergency room visits were due to ILI (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). With 4 Chicago doctor's offices reporting, 1.9% of visits were due to ILI.

Which influenza strains are circulating?

With 7 laboratories reporting, 57 (13%) of 440 specimens tested were positive for influenza in week 10. Among 32 specimens that tested positive for influenza A, 6 were subtyped as H3N2, 16 were subtyped as 2009 H1N1, and 10 were not subtyped. Twenty-five specimens tested positive for influenza B (Figure 2).

Where can I get more information?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Flu-View](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/)³ 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/fluupdate10-11.htm)⁴ and [Suburban Cook County](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation)⁵ are also available online.

Figure 1. Reported number of influenza-associated intensive care unit hospitalizations among Chicago residents, October 9, 2010-March 12, 2011.

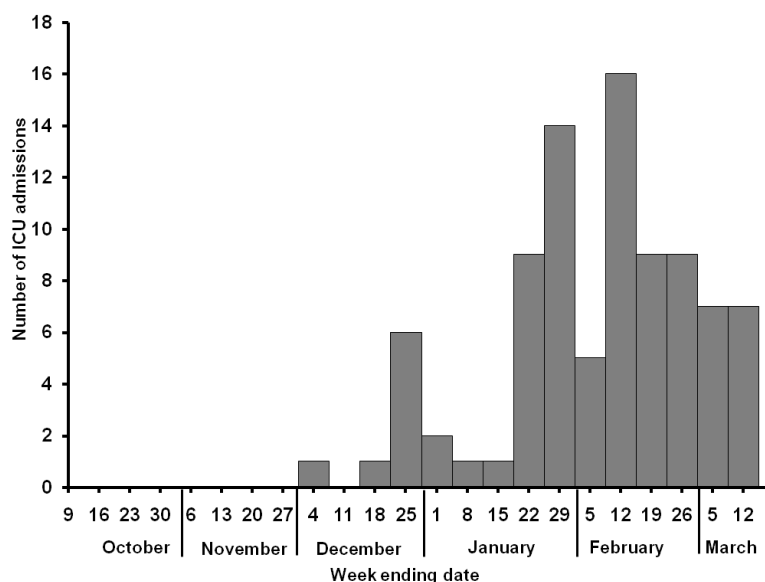
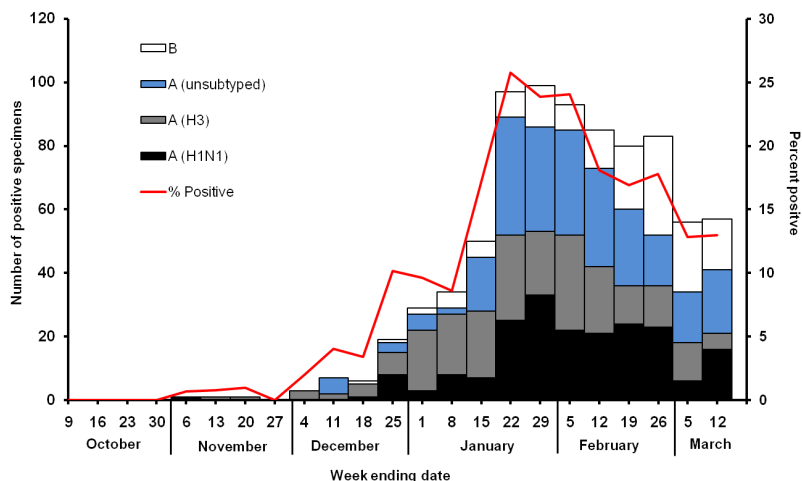


Figure 2. Influenza-positive tests reported by local laboratories serving Chicago hospitals that are equipped to identify influenza by types, by week, October 9, 2010-March 12, 2011.



¹http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/clinic/svcs/find_a_clinic.html

²https://www.chicagohan.org/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=28960&folderId=24344&name=DLFE-144.pdf

³<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>; ⁴<http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate10-11.htm>

⁵http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation