



# 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 continues to decline. Locally, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza has decreased by over eighteen percentage points from its peak reported in January. For the second consecutive week, the proportion of specimens testing positive for influenza B is higher than those testing positive for influenza A, accounting for 60% of all positive specimens. The H3N2 and H1N1 influenza A subtypes continue to co-circulate. The influenza vaccine protects against both influenza A and B. 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)<sup>1</sup> and by calling 311.

## Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

No influenza-associated ICU admissions were reporting for surveillance week 13 (March 27-April 2, 2011). Since October, a total of 94 influenza-associated ICU admissions of Chicago residents have been reported to CDPH.<sup>2</sup> Of these, 24% were children under 18 years of age, 27% were adults 18-49 years, and 49% were 50 years of age or older. The racial/ethnic distribution to date is 37% Black, 28% White, 21% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 9% not reported or other. No deaths were reported for surveillance week 13. A total of fourteen deaths have been reported so far this season. Two of these occurred in pediatric patients.

## How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

For the week of March 27-April 2, 2011, with 17 hospitals reporting, 6.1% of emergency room visits were due to ILI (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). This is the third consecutive week that a decrease has been noted (Figure 1). With 7 Chicago doctor's offices reporting, <1% of visits were due to ILI.

## Which influenza strains are circulating?

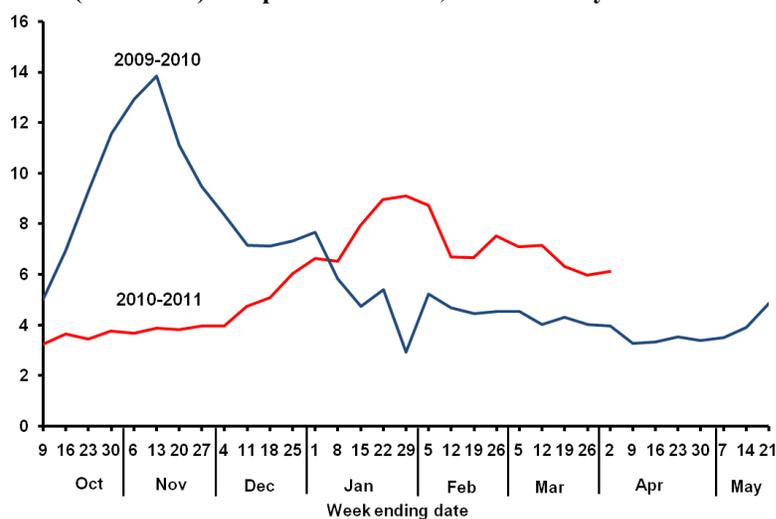
With 7 laboratories reporting, 25 (7.6%) of 331 specimens tested were positive for influenza in week 13. Among 10 specimens that tested positive for influenza A, 4 were subtyped as H3N2, 3 were subtyped as 2009 H1N1, and 3 were not subtyped. Fifteen specimens tested positive for influenza B (Figure 2).

## Where can I get more information?

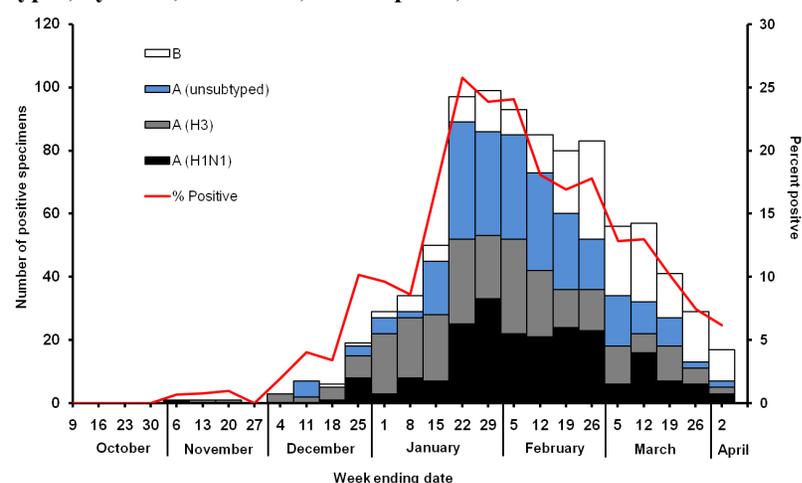
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Flu-View](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/)<sup>3</sup> report provides national updates and trends related to the intensity of influenza activity across the United States, as well as detailed information on antiviral resistance, severity of illness, and other topics.

Updates specific to [Illinois](http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate10-11.htm)<sup>4</sup> and [Suburban Cook County](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation)<sup>5</sup> are also available online.

**Figure 1. Weekly reported percent of emergency department visits attributed to influenza-like illness, Chicago, by week, for current season (2010-2011) and previous season, October-May.**



**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-April 2, 2011.**



<sup>1</sup>[http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/clinic/svcs/find\\_a\\_clinic.html](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/clinic/svcs/find_a_clinic.html)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.chicagohan.org/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?p\\_l\\_id=28960&folderId=24344&name=DLFE-144.pdf](https://www.chicagohan.org/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=28960&folderId=24344&name=DLFE-144.pdf)

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

<sup>5</sup>[http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu\\_current\\_situation](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation)