



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 low. Locally, the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza has decreased for the third consecutive week and remains at nearly the lowest level observed all season. Among the small number of specimens testing positive for influenza during the past surveillance week, both influenza A and B were detected in equal proportion. 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)¹ and by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

One influenza-associated ICU admissions was reported for surveillance week 16 (April 17-23, 2011). Since October, a total of 98 influenza-associated ICU admissions of Chicago residents have been reported to CDPH.² Of these, 25% were children under 18 years of age and 49% were 50 years of age or older. The racial/ethnic distribution to date is 37% Black, 30% White, 20% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 8% not reported or other. No deaths were reported for surveillance week 16. A total of fifteen deaths have been reported so far this season (both ICU and non-ICU) including two in pediatric patients.

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

For the week of April 17-23, 2011, with 16 hospitals reporting, 4.7% of emergency room visits were due to ILI (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). This is approaching levels seen during the same surveillance week in 2010 and has decreased by nearly half since its peak in January (Figure 1). With 4 Chicago doctor's offices reporting, 1.4% of visits were due to ILI.

Which influenza strains are circulating?

With 7 laboratories reporting, 6 (2.2%) of 274 specimens tested were positive for influenza in week 16. Among 3 specimens that tested positive for influenza A, 1 was subtyped as H3N2, 1 was subtyped as 2009 H1N1, and 1 was not subtyped. Three specimens tested positive for influenza B (Figure 2).

Where can I get more information?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/view/)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. 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.

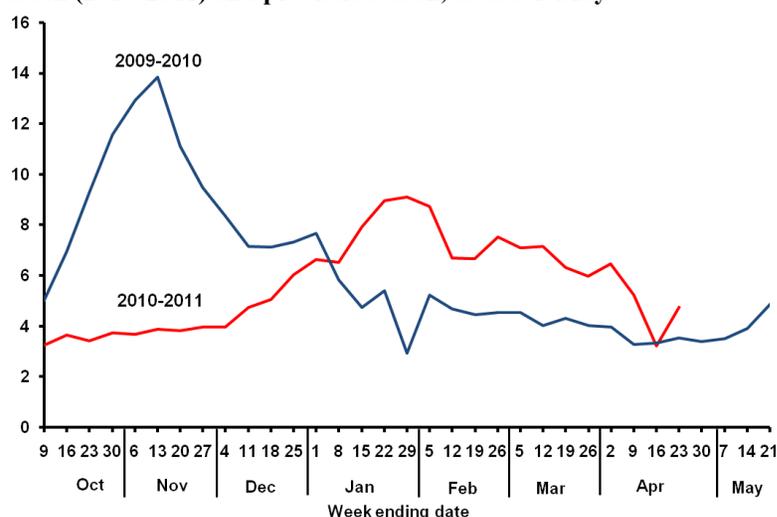
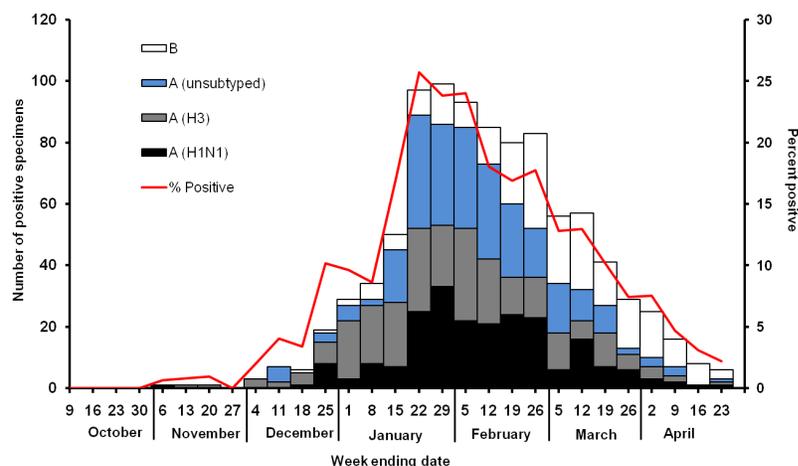


Figure 2. Influenza-positive tests reported by local laboratories serving Chicago hospitals that are equipped to identify influenza by types, by week, October 9, 2010-April 23, 2011.



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