



Chicago Flu Update



City of Chicago
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

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Chicago Department of Public Health
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What is the risk?

Currently, the risk of influenza infection in the Chicago area is low. At the national level, CDC has characterized eleven influenza A (H3N2) viruses (A/Perth/16/2009-like) and one influenza B virus (B/Brisbane/60/2008-like). Both the H3N2 and B strains detected are components of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine for the Northern hemisphere. Vaccination is the best way to protect against human seasonal 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. The Chicago Department of Public Health continues to hold influenza vaccination clinics throughout the city. A complete schedule of [City of Chicago influenza vaccine clinics](#)¹ is available on the City website and by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

No influenza-associated ICU hospitalizations were reported for week 44 (October 30-November 5, 2011). 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](#)².

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

For the week of October 30-November 5, 2011, with 17 hospitals reporting, 4.2% of emergency room visits were due to ILI (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). This is less than one percentage point higher than levels reported during the same surveillance week in 2010 (Figure 1). Several outpatient clinics throughout Chicago participate in the Influenza-like Illness Network (ILINet) by reporting the percentage of clinic visits due to ILI. From October 30-November 5, 2011, with 17 outpatient clinics reporting, 1.6% of outpatient clinic visits were due to ILI. This is similar to levels reported during the same surveillance week in 2010 (Figure 2).

Which influenza strains are circulating?

Data on influenza virus test results are reported by Chicago laboratories performing influenza subtyping. For the week of October 30-November 5, 2011, with 5 laboratories reporting, 1 of the 114 specimens tested for influenza was positive, typed as influenza B.

Where can I get more information?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](#)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](#)⁴ and [Suburban Cook County](#)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 (2011-2012) and previous two seasons, October-May.

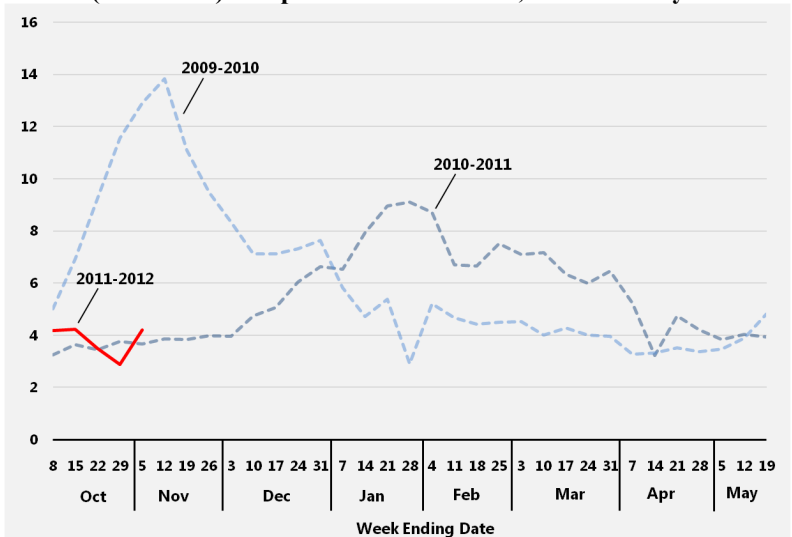
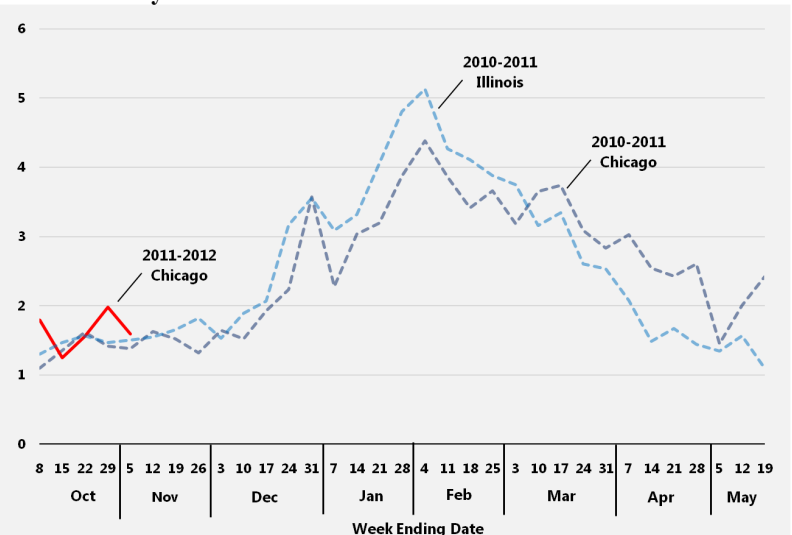


Figure 2. Weekly reported percent of outpatient clinic visits attributed to influenza-like illness, Chicago, by week, for current season (2011-2012) and previous season (Chicago and Illinois), October-May.



¹http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/flu/svcs/_cdph_flu_shot_sitesacrosschicago.html; ²<https://dph.partner.illinois.gov/>;

³<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm>; ⁴<http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/surveillance.htm>; ⁵<http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/data-reports/#Influenza>