



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 moderate. Widespread geographic spread of influenza is being reported by 44 states including Illinois. Locally, the number of influenza-associated intensive care unit (ICU) hospitalizations decreased from 13 in surveillance week 6 to 8 in surveillance week 7 and the percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza decreased for the second consecutive week. Influenza A strains account for 75% of all specimens testing positive for influenza, with the H1N1 subtype accounting for 67% of subtyped specimens; 25% of influenza-positive specimens are type 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?

Since October, a total of 60 influenza-associated ICU admissions of Chicago residents have been reported to CDPH (Figure 1).² Of these, 8 occurred in patients whose influenza-positive specimens were collected during surveillance week 7 (February 13-19, 2011). Fifteen (25%) of the reported ICU hospitalizations have been for pediatric patients. The racial/ethnic distribution to date is 42% Black, 25% White, 18% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 12% not reported or other. No deaths were reported for week 7. Seven deaths have been reported so far this season: 3 in ICU patients and 4 in non-ICU patients; all were 60 years of age or older.

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

For the week of February 13-19, 2011, with 16 hospitals reporting, 7.3% of emergency room visits were due to ILI (i.e., fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). This is three percentage points higher than levels reported during the same surveillance week in 2010. With 8 Chicago doctor's offices reporting, 1.5% of visits were due to ILI.

Which influenza strains are circulating?

With seven laboratories reporting, 80 (17%) of 473 specimens tested were positive for influenza in week 7. Among 60 specimens that tested positive for influenza A, 12 were subtyped as H3N2, 24 were subtyped as 2009 H1N1, and 24 were not subtyped. Twenty 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-February 19, 2011.

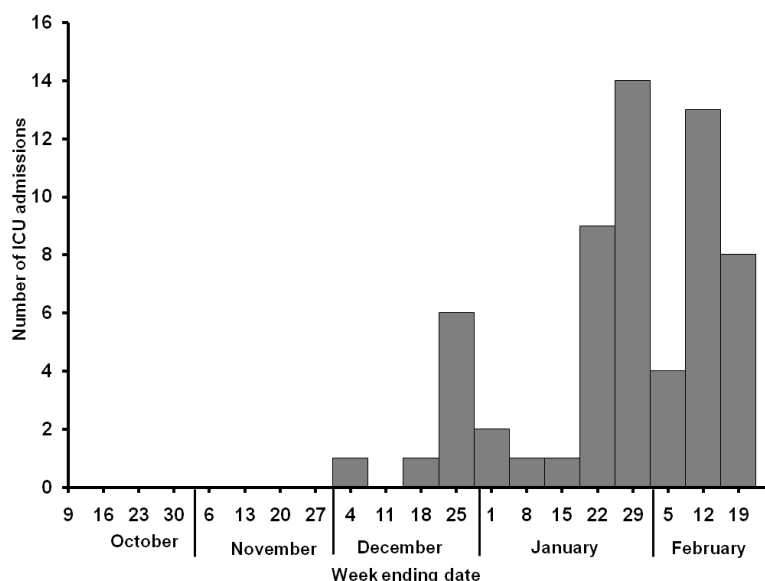
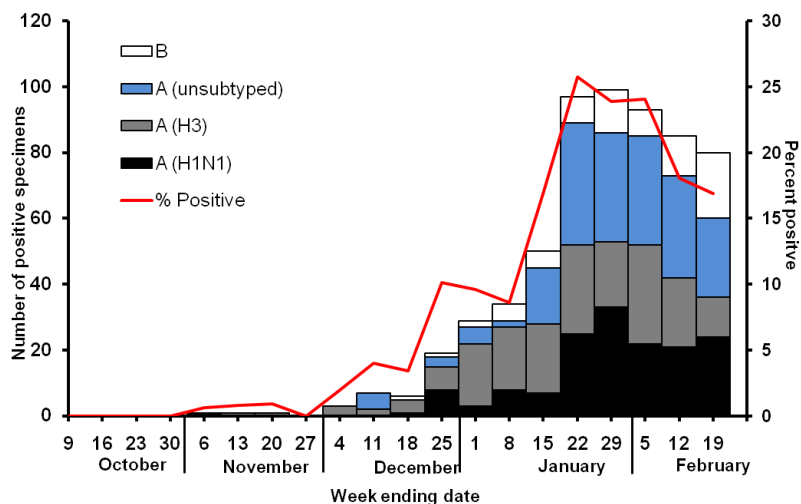


Figure 2. Influenza-positive tests reported by local laboratories serving Chicago hospitals that are equipped to identify influenza by types, by week, October 9, 2010-February 19, 2011.



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