



Chicago Flu Update



City of Chicago

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

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Chicago Department of Public Health

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What is the risk?

As of January 29, 2010, the risk of pandemic influenza A (H1N1) influenza infection in Chicago is low. The numbers of severe influenza infections, influenza-like illnesses, and positive influenza tests continue to decline. Due to the possibility of a recurrence of heightened activity in the coming months, all Chicagoans aged six months and older are encouraged to protect themselves from infection by getting vaccinated with the pandemic influenza vaccine. Chicagoans should ask their healthcare provider or pharmacist about vaccine availability. For those without a healthcare provider or whose healthcare providers do not have the pandemic vaccine, a schedule of [City of Chicago pandemic vaccine clinics](#) is available online or by calling 311.

Are severe cases of influenza occurring?

No influenza A (H1N1)-associated hospitalizations in Chicago residents have been reported for surveillance week 3 (January 17 – 23, 2010). This is the eleventh consecutive week that a decline has been noted (figure 1).

How much influenza-like illness is occurring?

With 20 Chicago hospitals reporting, 4.4% of emergency department visits were due to influenza-like illness (i.e. fever of 100°F or greater, with cough or sore throat). Pediatric hospitals continue to experience higher rates, but in hospitals serving adults levels of activity are comparable to what was reported in late September and early October, 2009 (figure 2). Among ten outpatient clinics reporting for the week of January 17 – 23, 2010, 2.3% of doctor's office visits were due to influenza-like illness. This level of activity is similar to levels seen during the same surveillance week during previous influenza seasons.

Which influenza strains are circulating?

For the week of January 17 – 23, 2010, with six laboratories reporting, 6 influenza A-positive specimens for which subtyping was performed were reported as presumptive pandemic influenza A (H1N1), 1 was reported as seasonal influenza A (H3), and no influenza B strains were reported. The seasonal influenza A(H3) strain was the first of this subtype to be reported by one of the local laboratories serving Chicago hospitals since October of 2009.

Where can I get more information?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](#)² 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](#)³ and [Suburban Cook County](#)⁴ are also available online.

¹http://egov.cityofchicago.org/webportal/COCWebPortal/COC_EDITORIAL/H1N1JanuarySchedule.pdf

²<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>; ³ <http://www.idph.state.il.us/flu/fluupdate09-10.htm>; ⁴ http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org/flu_current_situation

Figure 1. Reported number of hospitalizations associated with confirmed or presumptive pandemic influenza A (H1N1), Chicago, by week of specimen collection, April 2009—January 23, 2010

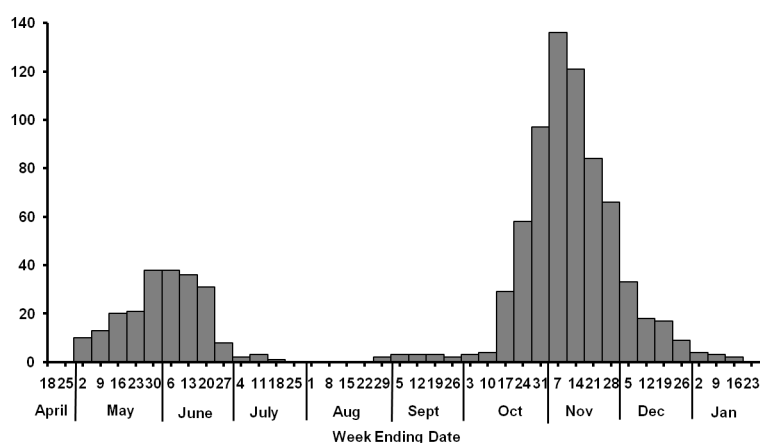


Figure 2. Weekly reported percent of emergency department visits attributed to influenza-like illness in two Chicago pediatric hospitals, and all Chicago hospitals serving adults (combined), August 30, 2009—January 23, 2010.

