

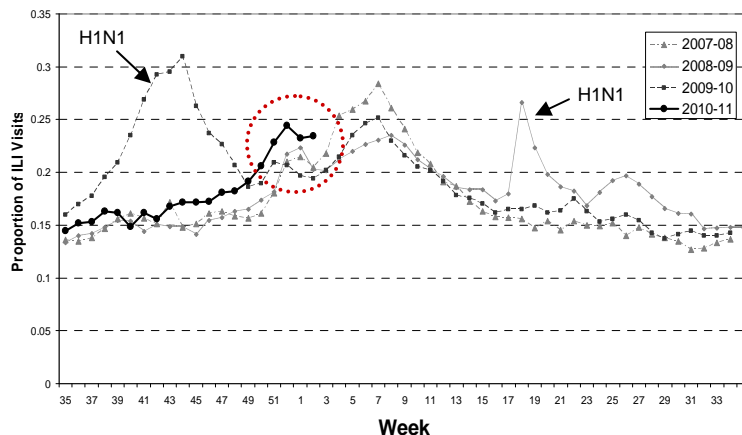
SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN FLU OCCURRING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Influenza activity is significantly increasing in Los Angeles County (LAC) resulting in several school outbreaks (due to influenza A and influenza B) as well as the first deaths of the season. In the past week, LAC Department of Public Health received reports of three flu-related deaths: a four-year old boy, a 29 year-old woman, and a 48 year-old man. The four-year old boy had no known underlying conditions that would increase his risk for complications from flu and he died with influenza A H3N2. The adults' only known risk condition was obesity (body mass index [BMI] > 30); their fatalities were due to the 2009 influenza A H1N1 strain. Based on past seasons, influenza activity is expected to increase through February and can continue to circulate into the spring. Therefore influenza vaccine should continue to be offered, even to "low risk" patients. RSV activity has also significantly increased in the past several weeks: pediatricians should counsel parents of high risk patients to take precautions. Finally, a low level of rhinovirus and parainfluenza continue to circulate.

LA County Surveillance Summary (2010-2011)
Surveillance Weeks 1 and 2

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 1	Week 2	10-11 Season YTD
Positive Flu Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	73 / 655 (11.1%)	69 / 478 (14.4%)	319 / 7,319 (4.4%)
Percent Flu A / B	52 / 48	43 / 57	44 / 56
Positive RSV Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive RSV Tests)	142 / 317 (44.8%)	127 / 289 (43.9%)	601 / 3,713 (16.2%)
Respiratory Outbreaks	0	5	8
Total Flu Deaths (Pediatric Deaths)	2 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)

Influenza-like Illness ED Visits in LA County (2007-2011)
Surveillance Week 2



NEW INFLUENZA RISK-FACTOR CONFIRMED: OBESITY LINKED TO RISK OF DEATH FROM H1N1

A recent study confirmed obesity is substantial risk factor for severe illness and complications due to 2009 H1N1 influenza infection. Using data collected from across California, researchers found extreme obesity (defined as a BMI of 40 or more) yielded a nearly three-fold increased odds of death from 2009 H1N1 infection. These findings support improving vaccination coverage among overweight and obese individuals. In addition, obese individuals should be encouraged to contact their medical provider immediately should they become ill with flu-like symptoms to expedite diagnosis and treatment if needed.

Louie, et al. (Published online January 4, 2011) Novel Risk Factor for a Novel Virus: Obesity and 2009 Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) Clinical Infectious Diseases.

www.cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2011/01/04/cid.ciq152.full

CDC UPDATES GUIDANCE FOR INFLUENZA ANTIVIRAL AGENTS AND RAPID DIAGNOSTIC TESTS DURING 2010-2011 SEASON

As influenza activity increases in the United States, clinicians are urged to consult CDC guidance on the use of influenza antiviral agents and rapid influenza diagnostic tests this season. Updated recommendations on the use of antiviral medications will be published in an upcoming MMWR, but an interim version of the recommendations is currently available on CDC's website:

www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/index.htm

The updated guidance for health care professionals on the use of rapid influenza diagnostic tests is available at:

www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/diagnosis/clinician_guidance_ridt.htm

Those without insurance or a regular health care provider may get a **FREE** flu shot from an LA County Public Health Center. Flu clinics are now being held on a walk-in basis during regular health center hours. (Exceptions: Glendale Health Center only Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, and Friday; North Hollywood Health Center only Friday mornings.)

A listing of all LA County Public Health Centers can be found here:

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/locator.htm#a