

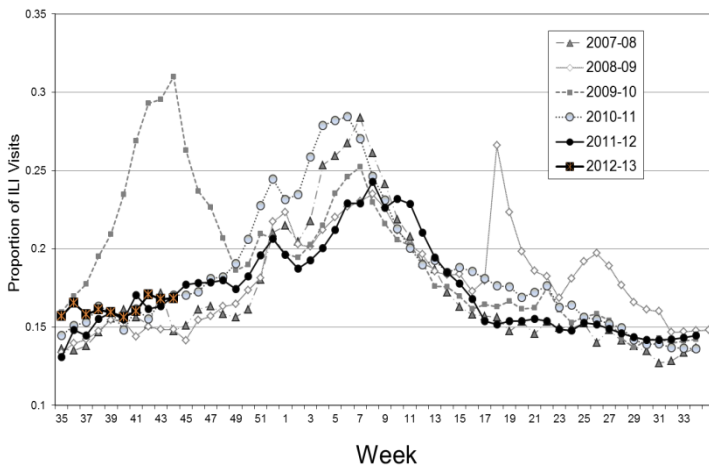
## Los Angeles County 2012-2013 Influenza Season Begins

Local respiratory surveillance has begun to identify influenza in Los Angeles County (LAC) for the 2012-2013 season. Thus far, respiratory disease activity has been low as is typical for this time in the season (Figure 1). Influenza has been detected in LAC (Table 1), yet rhinovirus and parainfluenza have been the most prevalent respiratory viruses (Figure 2) to date.

To the extent that the 2012 flu season in the Southern Hemisphere may be an indicator of our season to come, influenza activity was widespread in Australia and above baseline in New Zealand. There were also increased percentages of doctor's visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) in these countries. Elsewhere in the Southern Hemisphere, flu activity has varied.

Because immunity from influenza vaccination can take about two weeks, it is important to begin vaccinating now before flu is more prevalent. Nationwide this season, manufacturers have projected that they will produce between 146 million and 149 million doses of flu vaccine so there is no need to restrict or limit vaccination.

**Figure 1**  
**Influenza-like Illness ED Visits in LA County (2007-2013)**  
**Surveillance Week 44 (week ending November 3)**



**Table 1**  
**LA County Surveillance Summary (2012-2013)**  
**Surveillance Week 44**

LA County Surveillance Summary	Wk 44	2012-2013 Season YTD
Positive Flu Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	0/ 300 (0%)	9 / 2,164 (0.4%)
Percent Flu A / B	0/ 0	67 / 33
Positive RSV Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive RSV Tests)	5 /198 (2.5%)	19 / 1,717 (1.1%)
Community Respiratory Outbreaks, Reported	0	1
Flu Deaths, Confirmed (Pediatric Deaths, Confirmed)	----- *	0 (0)

\* Due to the lag time in reporting and confirmation of cause, weekly flu death data is delayed.

### Influenza and Respiratory Virus Reporting Requirements

#### Fatal Flu Cases

As a reminder, LAC Department of Public Health (DPH) requires the reporting of influenza fatalities of all ages with laboratory confirmed influenza of any strain. Influenza fatalities are defined as persons who died as a direct or indirect consequence of infection with influenza. Laboratory confirmation includes rapid test, culture, PCR, or other methods.

Confirmed influenza fatalities should be reported within 7 calendar days to LAC DPH either electronically via visual CMR or using the standard CMR form: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/reports/CMR-H-794.pdf>. The Influenza Fatality Case Report may also be used: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/EpiForms/InfluFatalForm.pdf>. Please note that this is an updated form for 2012.

#### Respiratory Outbreaks

All respiratory outbreaks should be reported within 1 working day to LAC DPH. As a rule of thumb, outbreaks may be defined as 5 or more new cases of influenza-like activity (ILI) (fever plus sore throat or cough) in a school or community setting, and either 3 or more ILI cases or 1 lab confirmed influenza case in a nursing home. Outbreaks may be reported using the standard CMR form: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/reports/CMR-H-794.pdf>

**For questions about reporting flu-related deaths or respiratory outbreaks, call Acute Communicable Disease Control 213-240-7941**

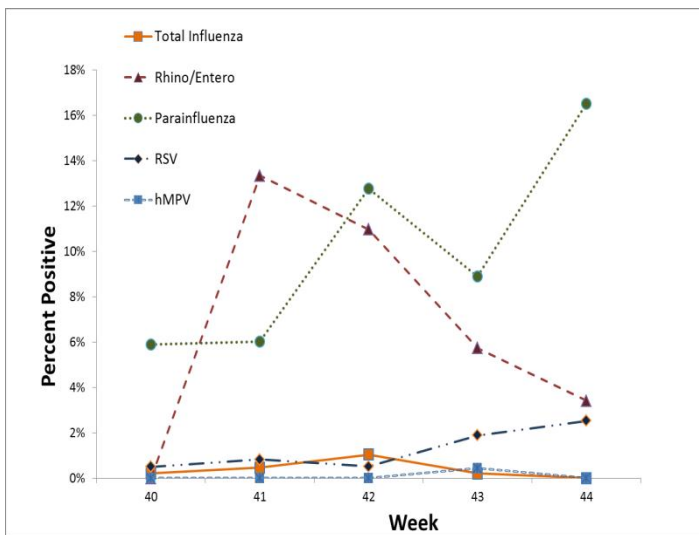
**Questions about the 2012-13 influenza vaccine or the new recommendations for vaccinating children <9 years of age?**

**For answers about vaccine coverage and ensuring proper dosing see the September issue of Rx for Prevention:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/bd5av8v>

**or call the Immunization Program at 213-351-7800**



**Figure 2**  
Respiratory Viruses in LA County  
Percent Positive Cases by MMWR Week



### Flu Vaccine and Egg Allergies?

Several articles have been recently published demonstrating the safety of influenza vaccines even in those with a documented history of egg allergy<sup>1,2</sup>. Consequently, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has issued more permissive influenza vaccination recommendations for persons with egg allergies. For the 2012-2013 influenza season, people who have experienced only hives from consuming eggs can receive TIV intramuscularly as long as they are treated by a health care provider who is familiar with the potential manifestations of egg allergies and can be observed by a health care professional for at least 30 minutes after receiving each dose. The 2012 ACIP recommendations have an algorithm to help guide clinician decision-making regarding vaccination of people with egg allergy<sup>3</sup>. Additional information about vaccinating people with egg allergy is available in the 2012 ACIP recommendations<sup>4</sup>. Live virus (nasal) vaccine should not be used in these patients.

For full length articles, see:

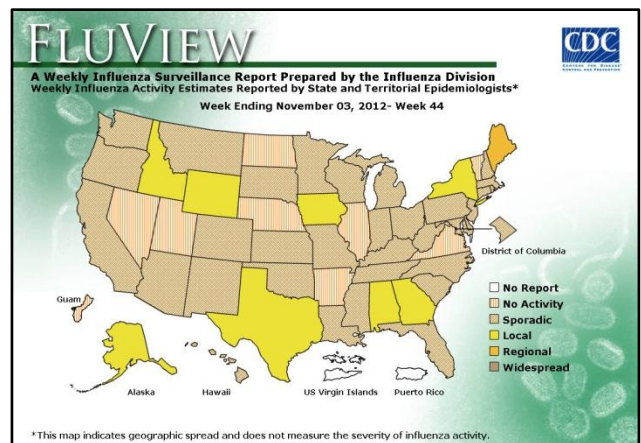
- <http://tinyurl.com/ahaqlpw>
- <http://tinyurl.com/bha2h5f>
- <http://tinyurl.com/bzb9bzv>
- <http://tinyurl.com/adm3rn3>

### HIGHLIGHTS of the LA County 2011-2012 Influenza Season

- Last season (2011-2012), Los Angeles County (LAC) experienced low levels of influenza and influenza-like-illness (ILI) activity overall. The characteristic two-peak cycle that has been typical for LAC during the majority of the past six seasons was observed.
- Compared to previous years, there were fewer influenza deaths and fewer community respiratory outbreaks, and ILI as measured by visits to LAC hospital emergency rooms was lower.
- The mild local influenza season was consistent with what was observed nationally, with the CDC reporting that 2011-2012 was one of the mildest on record (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/spotlights/2011-2012-flu-season-wrapup.htm>.)
- Experts speculate that prior years' successful vaccination campaigns could have been responsible, in part, for the mild season, underscoring the importance of continued influenza vaccination efforts.

For a full summary, visit:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/docs/Flu/Season11-12/SeasonSummary2011-12.pdf>



Nationally, flu activity is also minimal. As of week 44 (ending November 3) only one state reported regional levels of activity (Maine); eight states reported local activity (Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, New York, Texas, Wyoming). Sporadic influenza activity was reported by 33 states, with no activity reported by eight states.