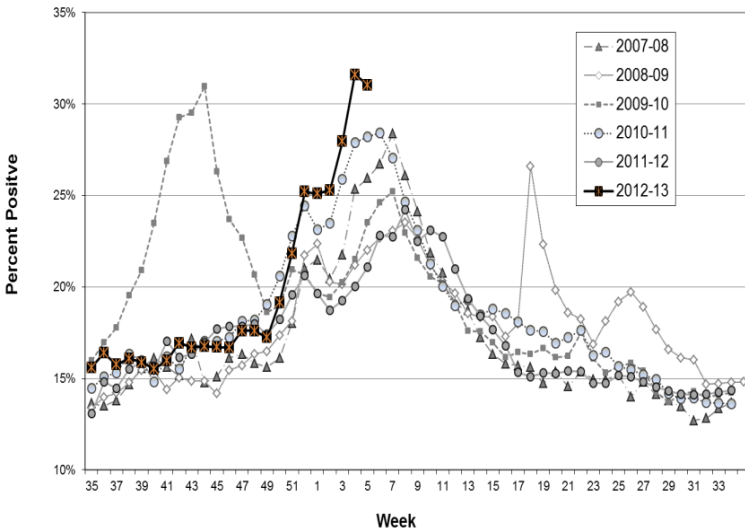


## Influenza Still Increasing in Los Angeles County

While overall respiratory illness in emergency departments has fallen a little (Figure 1), influenza detections continue to rise (Figures 2 and 3). During week 5 there were increasing reports of outbreaks of respiratory illness in the community (mostly in schools) and nursing homes (Table 1). Already 11 of the 55 outbreaks reported since September 2012 have been confirmed as due to influenza demonstrating the need to vaccinate those at greatest risk for acquiring influenza: the young and the elderly. Influenza vaccine programs at [schools](#) and [nursing homes](#) have been shown to be effective in reducing the rate of influenza in those facilities. Influenza-like illness activity continues to be high across the nation but decreasing overall; however California and the West Coast continue to have increasing levels of influenza (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>).

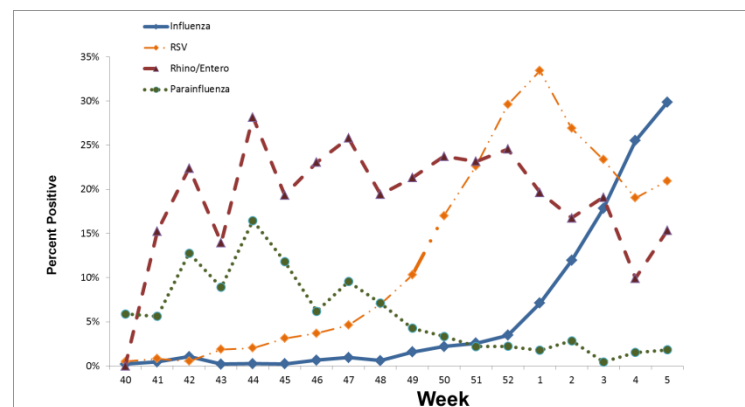
**Figure 1: Respiratory Illness ED Visits in LA County (2007-2013)**  
Percent Positive Visits by MMWR Surveillance Week



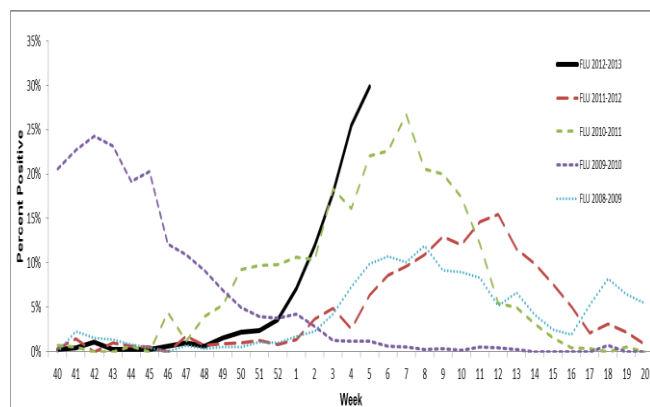
**Table 1: Surveillance Summary for LA County (2012-2013)**  
MMWR Surveillance Week 5

LA County Surveillance Summary	Week 5	2012-2013 Season YTD
Positive Flu Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive Flu Tests)	550/1843 (29.8%)	
Percent Flu A / B	79/21	
Positive RSV Tests / Total Tests (Percent Positive RSV Tests)	245/1770 (20.9%)	
<b>Respiratory Outbreaks:</b>		
Community	16	41
Skilled Nursing Facilities	8	14
Flu Deaths, Confirmed (Pediatric Flu Deaths, Confirmed)		7 (0)

**Figure 2: Respiratory Viruses in LA County (2012-2013)**  
Percent Positive Lab Reports by MMWR Surveillance Week



**Figure 3: Influenza in LA County (2008-2013)**  
Percent Positive Lab Reports by MMWR Surveillance Week



The prevalence of influenza is continuing to increase though the total volume of tests is decreasing (Table 1). We may be reaching peak influenza activity. RSV remains significantly high at 21% of all tests.

The percent of respiratory specimens positive for influenza has risen sharply in 2013 especially compared to previous years. Note that the data come from a mix of laboratories from community and academic hospitals and include both PCR and rapid test results. These data must be considered provisional because some laboratories may file amended reports in upcoming weeks.