

## Late Season Influenza B

The masking period for Los Angeles County (LAC) healthcare workers who did not receive an influenza vaccination ended on March 31 as stated in the [Health Officer Order](#), however influenza continues to circulate at low levels. During surveillance week 11 influenza activity actually increased from the previous 2 weeks, largely due to influenza B which has been the dominant strain since the beginning of March. A late season surge of influenza B activity is not uncommon and has been observed in previous seasons both locally and nationwide. Percent positive laboratory results for influenza is higher compared to this same time last year, however rhinovirus and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are both lower (Figure 1 and 2). In addition, reports of respiratory outbreaks and influenza-associated deaths have decreased over the past few weeks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that statewide influenza activity for California has been downgraded from regional to local (Figure 3).

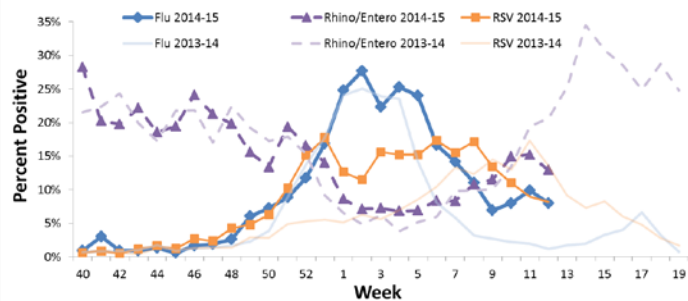
**Table 1. LA County Surveillance Summary**

	2014-2015		2013-2014	
	Week 12	YTD <sup>†</sup>	Week 12	YTD
Percent Positive Flu Tests	7.9%	13.9%	1.1%	10.8%
Percent Flu A/B	38/62	87/13	45/55	95/5
Community Respiratory Outbreaks	0	12	0	12
Influenza Confirmed Outbreaks	0	12	0	2
Pediatric Flu Deaths <sup>††</sup>	0	1	0	4
Adult Flu Deaths	0	42	0	97

<sup>†</sup>The influenza surveillance year started September 1, 2014

<sup>††</sup>Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, ILI symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death

**Figure 1. Influenza, Rhino/Enteroviruses, and RSV Percent Positive of Respiratory Viral Tests from Sentinel Sites by MMWR Week, LAC, 2013-2015**

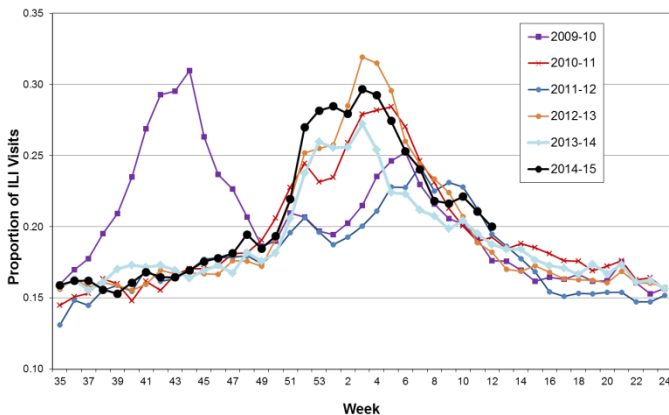


## Deaths Averted by Influenza Vaccination

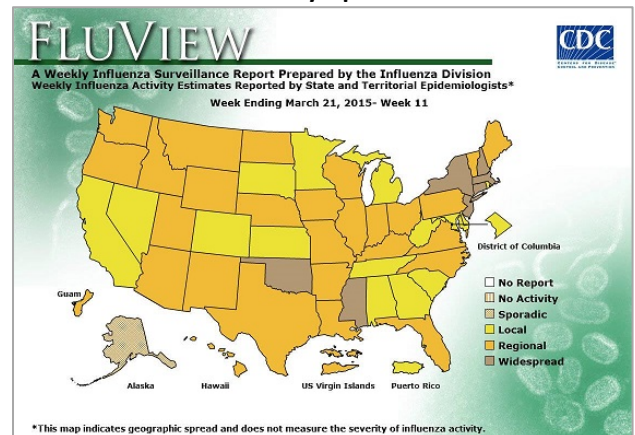
A recent study published in the journal *Vaccine* found that the estimated number of deaths averted by annual influenza vaccination is considerable, especially among adults >65 years old. The study looked at the past 8 influenza seasons starting with the 2005-06 season. The protective affect remained even during seasons determined to have modest vaccine efficacy. The estimates were conservative as the study did not take into account the indirect benefits of vaccination such as herd immunity.

[Deaths averted by influenza vaccination in the U.S. during the seasons 2005/06 through 2013/14](#)

**Figure 2. Respiratory Illness Emergency Department Visits, LAC 2009-2015**



**Figure 3. CDC Weekly US Map: Influenza Summary Update**



\*This map indicates geographic spread and does not measure the severity of influenza activity.