



Eye on Influenza

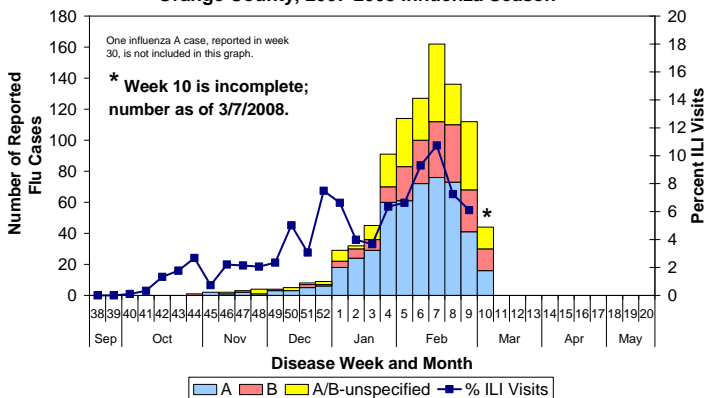
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Influenza reports in Orange County appear to have peaked during week 7 (week ending 2/16/08) and are decreasing. However, second peaks late in the season are not uncommon, especially with influenza B.

- **The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends influenza vaccination for all school-aged children.** This action adds children from 5 to 18 years of age to the list of persons for whom annual vaccination is recommended. As a result of the recommendation, the CDC predicts that an additional seven million children will be vaccinated. To allow time for planning, the agency states that immunization providers should prepare for implementation of the recommendation by fall of 2009. There is evidence that reducing flu transmission in children will limit the spread among their household contacts and in the community. In addition, coverage should reduce the burden of illness thus reducing school absenteeism and the need for flu-related medical care. For more info, see <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/general/news/feb2707acip.html>.
- **An official CDC Health Advisory was released last week** re-emphasizing the importance of influenza antiviral medications for use in persons at high risk for influenza complications or who have severe influenza illness. Because recent surveillance data indicated that many communities were reporting substantially increased influenza activity, CDC alerted clinicians to be fully aware of the potential benefits of antiviral medications during this influenza season. The two prescription antiviral medications recommended for treatment or prevention of influenza include oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) or zanamivir (Relenza®). For more information on treatment and/or prevention, see <http://www2a.cdc.gov/HAN/ArchiveSys/ViewMsgV.asp?AlertNum=00271>.
- **Researchers evaluated the use and impact of a mandatory declination form for an influenza vaccination program for healthcare workers:** To learn more, see *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol* 2008;29:302-308.

Reported Influenza Cases by Type & Percent of Visits Due to Influenza-Like Illness (ILI)
Orange County, 2007-2008 Influenza Season



Orange County, California, and U.S. **

- To date, there have been 939 total reported influenza cases in OC; 499 A, 198 B, & 242 A/B unspecified. Of the 499 influenza A, 147 have been subtyped: 60 A/H1 and 87 A/H3.
- To date, there have been 20 reported severe pediatric influenza (PICU) cases in OC, including one death; 14 tested positive for flu A and 6 B.
- National influenza activity appeared to peak during week 6 (week ending 2/9/08) and decreased thereafter. However, 47 states are still reporting widespread activity, including CA. Approximately 50% of influenza isolates characterized in the U.S. do not match components of this season's vaccine, although some cross-protection is still expected for some strains.

**Note: The number of reported cases does NOT correspond to the total number of cases occurring in OC as not all labs participate, the surveillance programs are not population based, and testing may be influenced by many factors such as public interest. However, the trends in influenza activity are likely to be reflected accurately.

Avian Influenza Update (as of Mar. 5th)

- 371 human H5N1 cases have been confirmed in Azerbaijan (8), Cambodia (7), China (30), Djibouti (1), Egypt (46), Indonesia (129), Iraq (3), Lao People's Democratic Republic (2), Myanmar (1), Nigeria (1), Pakistan (1), Thailand (25), Turkey (12), and Vietnam (105), and have resulted in 235 (63%) deaths. Infected birds have been reported in multiple areas in Asia, Africa and Europe.
- Report any suspect avian influenza cases to OC Epidemiology at 714-834-8180.

Recommended Resources
 CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>
 OC: <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/epi/flu/surveillance.htm>
 CA: <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/VRDL/html/FLU/Fluintro.htm>
 HHS: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>; General: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

If you have any comments about this flyer, contact Alina Burgi or Pamela Hipp at (714) 834-8180. To receive this newsletter by email, please contact us at epi@ochca.com.

