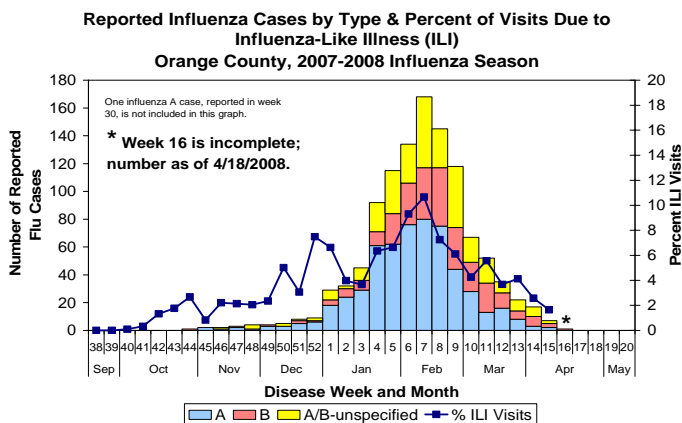




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Although influenza activity continues to decrease in Orange County, influenza viruses are still circulating.

- **Interim '07-'08 season estimate of inactivated influenza vaccine efficacy (VE) against medically attended influenza A infection was 58%.** All patients visiting a clinic facility in Marshfield, Wisconsin, between 1/21-2/8/08 were screened for study eligibility and 619 patients with acute respiratory or febrile illness were included in this interim analysis. All patients were tested for influenza using reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and flu was detected in 191 (31%). Approximately 19% of those with influenza had been vaccinated versus 39% of the influenza-negative, giving a VE of 44% for prevention of medically attended influenza overall (A and B combined). No VE was observed against influenza B. This interim analysis suggests that even in a season without optimal match to circulating strains, vaccination still provided some protection against medically attended flu infection in this population (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5715.pdf>).
- **WHO study finds Asian countries as source for new seasonal influenza strains.** WHO researchers analyzed 13,000 samples of influenza A/H3N2 virus collected across six continents from 2002 to 2007. Results revealed that newly emerging strains of H3N2 appeared in East and Southeast Asian countries about 6 to 9 months earlier than anywhere else. Identifying the source of the viruses could allow global health officials to better predict which viruses are most likely to cause the most disease and include them in the annual seasonal influenza vaccine. To read more, visit <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/general/news/apr1608influenza.html>.
- **Flu vaccination myths still a challenge in healthcare institutions.** Reports from four institutions at the 18th annual Scientific Meeting of the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America indicate that large proportions of hospital staff believe that the flu vaccine causes influenza or triggers side effects. Others believe that previous flu infections have made them immune. According to CDC, on average, only 40% of healthcare workers receive the vaccine each year. For more info, see <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/apr0908shea.html>.
- **WHO laboratory test results support epidemiologic findings that suggest limited human to human transmission of H5N1 among some close family members but no evidence of sustained or community transmission in Pakistan outbreak.** See http://www.who.int/csr/don/2008_04_03/en/index.html.
- **Draft guidance for protecting vulnerable groups in flu pandemic:** <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/apr1608atrisk.html>.



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

- To date, there have been 1,118 total reported influenza cases in OC; 563 A, 264 B, & 291 A/B unspecified. Of the 563 influenza A, 208 have been subtyped: 69 A/H1 and 139 A/H3.
- National and state influenza activity continues to decrease.

**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 Apr. 17th)

- Additional H5N1 cases have been confirmed in Egypt, with a total of 381 human cases reported from 14 countries, including 240 (63%) deaths. Infected birds have been reported in multiple areas in Asia, Africa and Europe.

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/dc/dc/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.

