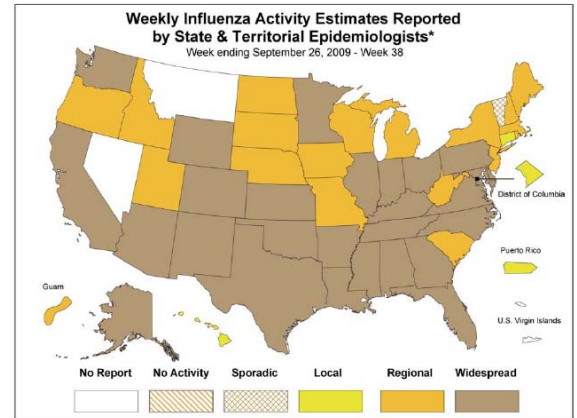




Orange County Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment, 1719 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St., Santa Ana, CA 92706, (714) 834-8180

## Influenza Update

- **Influenza activity widespread in 27 states, including California.** Outpatient visits to sentinel providers for influenza-like illness (ILI) continue to be well above baseline. See [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).
- **Orange County (OC) influenza update:** Priorities for surveillance are focused on severe illness to detect any changes in the virulence or epidemiology of the pandemic H1N1 virus and to assess the relative contributions of seasonal and pandemic strains in severe respiratory illness in the community. **Effective 10/4/09, case testing through Public Health will be limited to severe ICU/fatal cases with influenza-like illness, pneumonia, severe febrile respiratory illness, or any positive influenza test.** For the latest criteria and case history form, see [www.ochealthinfo.com/h1n1/providers](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/h1n1/providers). Sentinel providers and hospital laboratories can continue to submit specimens for testing as part of our virologic surveillance.
- **CDC updates recommendations for clinical use of influenza diagnostic testing for 2009-10 influenza season.** See [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/diagnostic\\_tests.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/diagnostic_tests.htm). Key points include:
  - Most patients with clinical illness consistent with uncomplicated influenza do NOT require diagnostic influenza testing for clinical management.
  - Consider influenza diagnostic testing in patients:
    - Who are hospitalized with suspected influenza (*Note: testing is available commercially; Orange County Public Health will only be testing those hospitalized in ICU or who died; see above*);
    - Who died of an acute illness in which influenza was suspected;
    - For whom a diagnosis of influenza will inform clinical or infection control decisions or management of close contacts. (*Note: decisions should not be delayed pending testing results*).
  - Sensitivities of rapid influenza tests and immunofluorescence assays (FA) are lower than polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests and viral culture; a negative rapid or FA test does not rule out influenza.
- **CDC summarizes bacterial coinfections in fatal influenza 2009 (H1N1) cases.** Almost half of the bacterial copathogens identified were *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, emphasizing the importance of encouraging use of pneumococcal vaccine in those at increased risk (all children age < 5 years, persons aged 2-64 years with certain health conditions, and all persons aged ≥ 65 years). Other common pathogens included group A streptococcus and *Staphylococcus aureus*. Clinicians should consider empiric treatment of patients hospitalized with community-acquired pneumonia with influenza antiviral agents and appropriate antibiotics. See [www.cdc.gov/mmwr](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr) (10/2/09 issue).
- **Surgical masks noninferior to N95 respirators in preventing laboratory-confirmed influenza among nurses in Ontario (Canada) hospitals.** 446 nurses were randomly assigned to use masks (225) or N95 respirators (221) during this past influenza season (study stopped 4/23/09 because of recommendations for use of N95s for care of suspect 2009 H1N1 cases). Influenza infection occurred in 50 (24%) of the mask group and 48 (23%) of the N95 group. See *JAMA* 10/1/09 on-line issue. Additional clinical studies are needed to assess the relative contribution of aerosols in influenza transmission and the effectiveness of PPE in preventing infection in healthcare workers.



### Pandemic influenza H1N1 vaccine update

- Multiple new or updated documents are available from the CDC addressing vaccination in pregnant women, vaccine financing, vaccine for seniors, and more. See [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu).
- **First pandemic H1N1 vaccine doses (live attenuated nasal spray) expected next week.** For local H1N1 vaccine questions: 714-834-8560 or [www.ochealthinfo.com/h1n1](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/h1n1). **To order vaccine:** [www.calpanflu.org](http://www.calpanflu.org).

*If you have any comments about this flyer, contact Michele Cheung, MD MPH, at (714) 834-8180.  
To receive this newsletter by email, please contact us at [epi@ochca.com](mailto:epi@ochca.com).*