INFLUENZA WATCH
Summary of Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH)
Influenza and Other Respiratory Disease Surveillance

Updated: 11-28-2022
MMWR Week: 46
Ending on: 11-19-2022

To subscribe to LAC DPH Viral Respiratory Illness Surveillance
Updates email “Subscribe” to influenza@ph.lacounty.gov

Influenza Surveillance at-a-Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virology</th>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Severe Disease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>25.1%</strong> of specimens tested at LAC sentinel labs were positive for influenza in week 46. This is <strong>more than</strong> in week 45. This season, more Influenza A has been detected than Influenza B.</td>
<td>Visits for influenza-like illness accounted for <strong>12.7%</strong> of emergency department visits in week 46, which is <strong>more than</strong> in week 45.</td>
<td><strong>Pneumonia, Influenza, and COVID-19</strong> accounted for <strong>11%</strong> of all deaths registered in LAC during week 45, which is <strong>more than</strong> in week 44. <strong>1 confirmed influenza-associated death</strong> has been reported since the start of the respiratory surveillance season (10/2/22).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See indicator specific sections for associated methods.

**DHP is currently investigating a data quality issue with one participating laboratory. Positivity rates and specimen counts may not match what was reported last week.**

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH) prepares this newsletter to summarize current influenza surveillance data in Los Angeles County. **Weekly surveillance data are preliminary and subject to change.** More information regarding methods can be found on the surveillance system specific pages of this report.

**COVID-19 surveillance data is published in the weekly COVID Watch surveillance report.** Daily counts of COVID cases and deaths are available on the LAC DPH website at [http://dashboard.publichealth.lacounty.gov/covid19_surveillance_dashboard/](http://dashboard.publichealth.lacounty.gov/covid19_surveillance_dashboard/)

* LAC DPH surveillance data excludes the cities of Long Beach and Pasadena.

** The respiratory virus surveillance period starts with MMWR week 40 and runs through week 39 of the following year. The 2022-23 season started on Oct 2, 2022.
**Virologic Surveillance**

**Sentinel Surveillance Laboratories**

Viral surveillance data is provided by clinical laboratories serving hospitals and healthcare networks across Los Angeles County. Participating laboratories provide the number of positive tests and total number of specimens tested for SARS-CoV2, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus.

*The baseline is defined as the mean percentage of specimens testing positive during non-influenza weeks for the previous three seasons plus two standard deviations. Non-epidemic weeks are periods of ≥2 consecutive weeks during which each week accounted for <2% of the season’s total number of specimens that tested positive for influenza. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the circulation of other respiratory viruses. Pandemic weeks are excluded from the baseline calculation.*

**Table 1. Respiratory Specimens tested for Influenza at LAC Sentinel Laboratories, this week and season to date**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>This Week*</th>
<th>Previous Week*</th>
<th>Data Cumulative Since October 2, 2022 (Week 40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of specimens tested</td>
<td>13,275</td>
<td>11,511</td>
<td>65,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of positive specimens (%)</td>
<td>3,333 (25.1%)</td>
<td>2,478 (21.5%)</td>
<td>9,154 (14.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive specimens by type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza A</td>
<td>3,324 (100%)</td>
<td>2,469 (100%)</td>
<td>9,116 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza B</td>
<td>9 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (0%)</td>
<td>38 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data current as of date of report. May not include all reporting sites.*
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Table 2. Respiratory Specimens tested for Respiratory Syncytial Virus at LAC Sentinel Laboratories, this week and season to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>This Week*</th>
<th>Previous Week</th>
<th>Data Cumulative Since October 2, 2022 (Week 40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of specimens tested</td>
<td>4,287</td>
<td>4,597</td>
<td>25,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of positive specimens (%)</td>
<td>728 (17%)</td>
<td>904 (19.7%)</td>
<td>4,213 (16.67%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data have been shifted so that week 1 aligns across all seasons.

Figure 2. Percentage of Respiratory Specimens Testing Positive for Influenza at LAC Sentinel Surveillance Laboratories by Season, 2016-17 Through 2022-23

Figure 3. Respiratory Specimens Tested and Percent Positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) by LAC Sentinel Surveillance Laboratories, 2022-23 Season
**INFLUENZA WATCH**

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**Figure 4. Percentage of Respiratory Specimens Testing Positive for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) at LAC Sentinel Surveillance Laboratories by Season, 2016-17 Through 2022-23**

- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20
- 2020-21
- 2021-22
- 2022-23

*Data have been shifted so that week 1 aligns across all seasons.*

**Figure 5. Percentage of Respiratory Specimens Testing Positive by Viral Etiology, Los Angeles County Sentinel Surveillance Laboratories, 2022-23 Influenza Season**

- Rhino/Entero
- Paraflu
- Human Meta

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Acute Communicable Disease Control
(213) 240-7941 [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov)
Illness

Los Angeles County Emergency Department (ED) Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) and COVID-19 Visits

Public Health's Syndromic Surveillance Project monitors initial self-reported symptoms from patients presenting to participating emergency departments throughout LAC. These symptoms are categorized into different clinical syndromes according to specific code words. Visits are included in the COVID-19 category if the chief complaint field includes any mention of “COVID”, “Coronavirus” or similar key words. The syndrome of ILI is defined as mention of influenza; or fever (subjective or measured greater than 100°F) plus cough or sore throat. The ILI and COVID-19 classified ED visits for all ages and by age group are analyzed weekly and year-round. The COVID-19 and ILI categories are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 6. Emergency Department Visits for Influenza-like Illness and COVID-19 per MMWR week, Los Angeles County, 2022-23 Influenza Season

Ending date of MMWR week

Acute Communicable Disease Control Program Syndromic Surveillance Unit
Figure 7. Emergency Department Visits for Influenza-like Illness by Age Groups per MMWR Week, Los Angeles County, 2022-23 Influenza Season

Figure 8. Emergency Department Visits for Influenza-like Illness, Los Angeles County 2019-20 through 2022-23 Influenza Seasons
The seasonal baseline of pneumonia, influenza, and COVID-19 (PIC) deaths is calculated using a periodic regression model that incorporates a robust regression procedure applied to data from the previous 5 years. An increase of 1.645 standard deviations above the seasonal baseline of PIC deaths is considered the “epidemic threshold,” i.e., the point at which the observed proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia, influenza or COVID-19 was significantly higher than would be expected at that time of the year in the absence of substantial virus-related mortality.
Technical note: The number of deaths reported in recent weeks does not represent all deaths that occurred in the reporting period. Data may be incomplete due to a lag between when the death occurred and when the death was registered. Previous weeks counts or percentages may change as vital records are updated with lagged death certificates. The count includes all certificates of deaths (excludes fetal deaths) occurring in the County of Los Angeles (excluding Long Beach and Pasadena) regardless of the residence of the deceased.

Resources

LAC DPH Influenza Page http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/flu.htm
LAC DPH RSV Page http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Diseases/RSV.htm
California Department of Public Health Influenza (Flu), RSV, and Other Respiratory Diseases https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx