



Eye on Influenza

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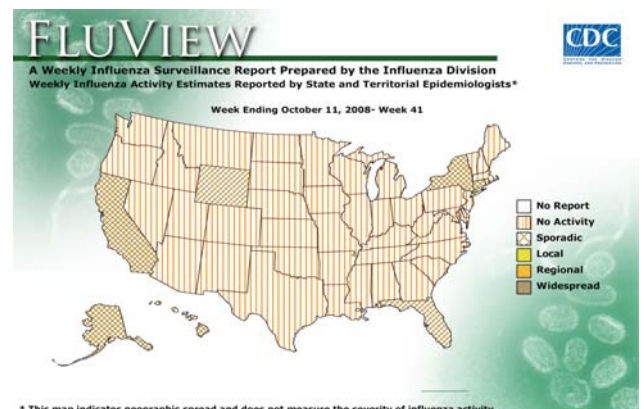
The Orange County Health Care Agency has confirmed its first influenza case (influenza A) of the 2008-2009 season. Consider influenza in your patients with fever and/or respiratory systems.

- **Stay healthy, get vaccinated!** The Orange County Health Care Agency will be offering free flu shots at numerous locations throughout the County beginning the week of October 27th. For flu shot locations and eligible groups, see <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/Public/flu/index.htm>. In addition, available retail flu clinics can be found at www.flucliniclocator.org.
- **Flu shot requirements for healthcare workers in acute care hospitals.** Since July 1, 2007, California has required that each general acute care hospital offer free onsite flu vaccinations (if quantities suffice) and *require* its employees to be vaccinated (or decline in writing). The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) is now recommending that influenza vaccine be required annually for *all* healthcare personnel with direct patient care. A new element of the APIC recommendation is that an *informed* declination be obtained from employees that decline for other than medical reasons; employees will be informed that by declining flu vaccine, they will not only be putting their patients at risk but also themselves, their family, and the community as a whole. The policy statement notes that healthcare workers can transmit the flu virus to others before they have any symptoms. In addition, multiple studies have shown that 70% of health workers continue to work even when sick with the flu. The proposed goal for vaccination among healthcare workers is at least 75%. For more information, review the California Health and Safety Code Section 1288.7 and visit <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/general/news/oct1008apic.html>.
- **CDC contracts with private biological resource business to establish the Influenza Reagent Resource Center (CDC-IRR).** The purpose of the CDC-IRR is to improve researchers', developers' and public health officials' access to influenza viruses (including viruses that could pose a pandemic risk), test kits, and reagents via a secured internet web portal for approved users. The CDC expects the system will speed the development of better diagnostic tests, antiviral drugs, and vaccines. In addition, the CDC-IRR will serve as a source of reagents for qualified laboratories to provide additional support in the event of an emerging pandemic. See <http://www.cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2008/r081008.htm>.
- **Seven states reported sporadic flu cases.** During disease week 41 (week ending October 11th; the second official week of the 2008-09 influenza season), CDC reported that seven states, including Alaska, California, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, New York, and Wyoming, reported sporadic influenza activity; defined as small numbers of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases or a single laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreak with no increase in cases of influenza-like illness. The remaining 43 states reported no activity. From May 18 to September 27, CDC antigenically characterized six flu viruses (four A/H1, one A/H3, and one B), all of which were antigenically similar to the viruses selected for the 2008-2009 vaccine. See the map below and the influenza season summary for weeks 40 & 41 <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>.

Avian Influenza Update

- No new human H5N1 cases have been reported by the WHO since Sept. 10th. For the latest WHO H5N1 updates, see www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/.

National Update (week ending October 11th)



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.
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