



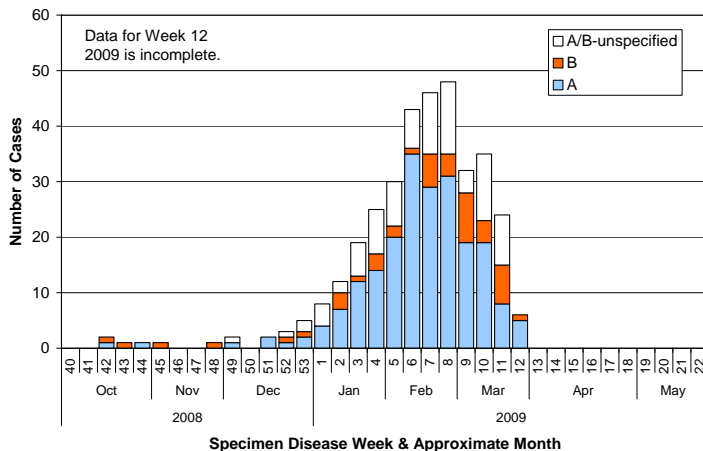
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Influenza activity continues throughout the U.S. It's not too late to vaccinate! Free flu vaccine for eligible groups is still available: www.ohealthinfo.com/Public/flu/index.htm.

- **Highly pathogenic H5N1 viruses in Africa elucidated; genetic mutations raise concern.** Sixty-seven H5N1 viruses from across Africa were analyzed in a recent study. Three sub-lineages (families) of virus were found and were co-circulating in Africa in 2006-2008, indicating multiple independent introductions of H1N1 into the continent. Genetic analysis found mutations in these viruses that are typical of human influenza viruses and resistance to antiviral drugs, raising concern of future human-to-human transmission and challenges to treatment/prophylaxis. See: <http://www.plosone.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0004842>
- **Online pandemic influenza resource library now available.** The National Public Health Information Coalition has created a clearinghouse of pandemic communication and planning materials online at <http://www.nphicpanflu.org/panflusearch.aspx>. Users can search by keyword or pre-categorized topic, resource type, audience, originating state, and language. Users can also add their own materials.
- **Hospital survey identifies factors associated with successful health care worker (HCW) flu vaccination programs.** Fifty hospitals in 33 states were surveyed. Programs with vaccine available on weekends; train-the-trainer programs; or visible support from, and accountability to, hospital leadership had significantly higher HCW vaccination coverage. Requirement of declination statements did not significantly improve coverage. Survey results were presented at this year's Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of American (SHEA) conference. Abstract available through: <http://www.shea-online.org/>. Click on Online Program Planner and search for presentation # 268.
- **Canadian study finds that HCWs with acute respiratory illness (ARI) work while sick.** In a prospective study of 56 Toronto HCWs during the 2007-2008 influenza season (when the flu vaccine was poorly protective), 87% developed at least one ARI (16% were flu-positive among 44 episodes of illness tested), 92% of those who had an ARI worked on the first day of their illness and 85% worked all days of their illness. Study results were presented at this year's SHEA conference. Abstract available through: <http://www.shea-online.org/>. Click on Online Program Planner and search for presentation # 270.
- **International insurance/financial industry trade group urges members to plan for pandemic flu.** London-based Chartered Insurance Institute issued a report that encourages businesses to plan for reduced service levels, ensuring staff safety, telecommuting, and liability issues related to event cancellations. See: http://www.cii.co.uk/downloaddata/TP_15_Maynard.pdf

****Note:** The number of reported cases does NOT correspond to the total number of cases occurring in OC as not all hospitals/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.

**Reported Influenza Cases, by Week and Type, Orange County, CA
2008-2009**



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

- 347 influenza reports have been received in OC: 61% flu A (of which 44% were H1, 10% H3, 46% not subtyped), 14% flu B, and 25% flu A/B unspecified.
- Overall flu activity has declined slightly in the US while the proportion of flu B cases has increased.
- CA flu activity has been upgraded to “widespread”, mostly due to increased activity in the central region of the state.
- 79% of the B strains characterized in the US this season were of the Victoria lineage, which is not in this season’s vaccine. Circulating A/H1 and H3 strains appear to match the vaccine.

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