



# MARYLAND INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE REPORT - Week 13 (Mar. 29 to Apr. 4, 2009)

Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control Programs | Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

- Influenza activity in Maryland is “LOCAL” with an increased proportion of visits to providers for influenza-like illness (ILI) in one of five surveillance regions in Maryland.
- 1% of respondents to the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey reported ILI symptoms | The median percent of ILI visits to sentinel providers was 0.9%
- Reported confirmed cases continued to decrease for the fourth week in a row.
- Based on previous flu seasons’ observations, flu activity should continue to decrease through April and end in early May.

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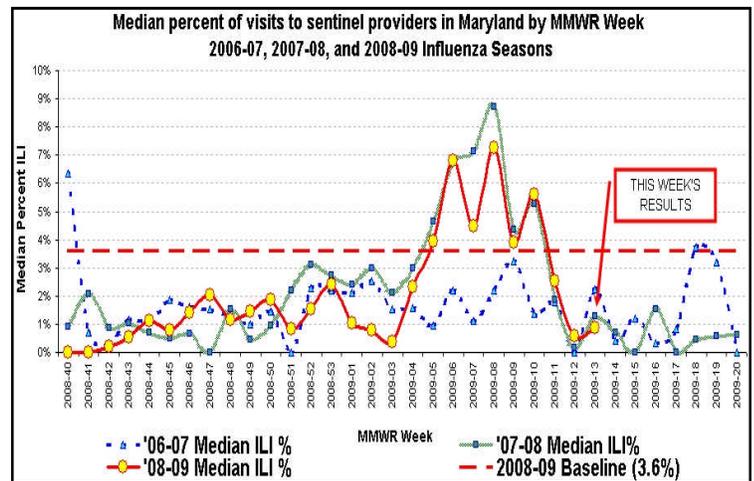
## OUTPATIENT INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI) SURVEILLANCE NETWORK

This week, a total of 22 ability in reported ILI visits for ILI were reported by 6 providers. The median percent of ILI visits in Maryland was 0.9%. This is **below** the state baseline of 3.6%.

Sentinel providers are health care providers who report to us the proportion of patient visits for influenza like illness. Because of the great vari-

ability in reported ILI proportions among providers each week, the median ILI is used instead of the average. Half of the ILI reports were below the median and half were above.

If you are interested in becoming a sentinel provider, please feel free to contact us at [flu@dhmh.state.md](mailto:flu@dhmh.state.md) or by phone at 410-767-6700.

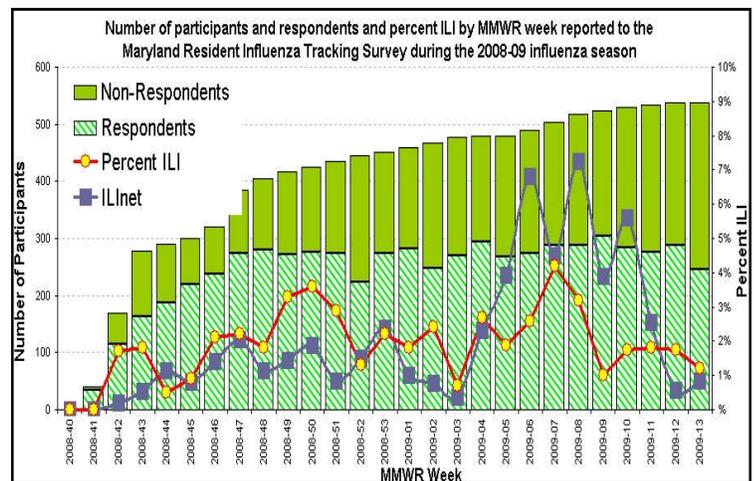


## MARYLAND RESIDENT INFLUENZA TRACKING SURVEY RESULTS

A total of 538 participants signed up at [www.tinyurl.com/flu-enroll](http://www.tinyurl.com/flu-enroll) by the end of week 13. Of the 538 residents who received the weekly survey, 246 (46%) responded to it. Among the respondents, 3 (1%) reported flu-like symptoms.

Because there is no baseline to compare these results, and the sample size is small (compared to the population), caution must be taken when interpreting

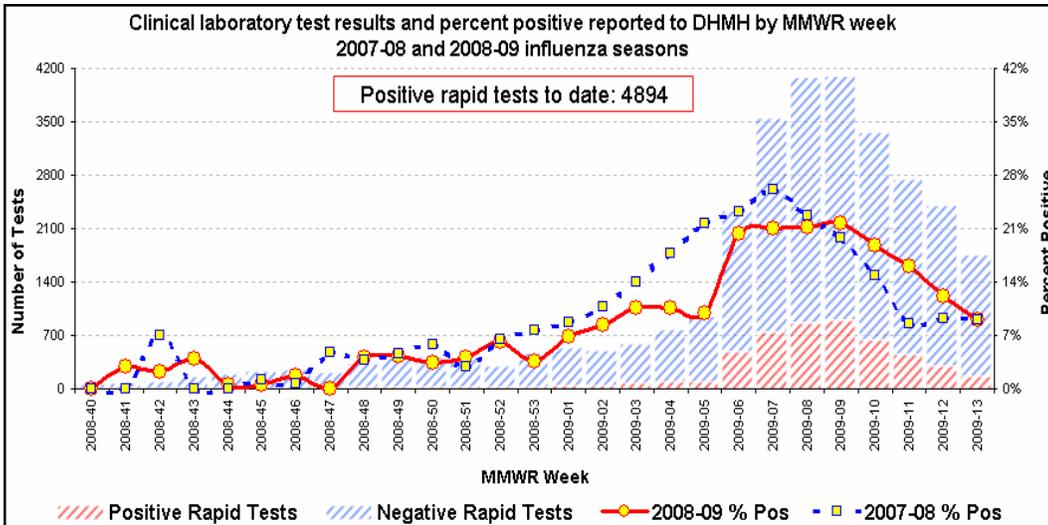
the results. We continue to recruit participants. Please enroll at the link above or pass on the link to anyone interested.



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**MARYLAND CLINICAL LABORATORY INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE**

During week 13, a total of 1,743 rapid influenza tests were reported by 26 reporting clinical laboratories. Of these, **157 tests (9%) were positive**. **NOTE:** We have added 10 new clinical labs to our network starting on week 6.



| Rapid Test Result | No.          | %           |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Type A            | 879          | 18%         |
| Type B            | 572          | 12%         |
| Type A or B       | 3,443        | 70%         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>4,894</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Number of positive rapid influenza tests by virus type, 2008-09 influenza season.

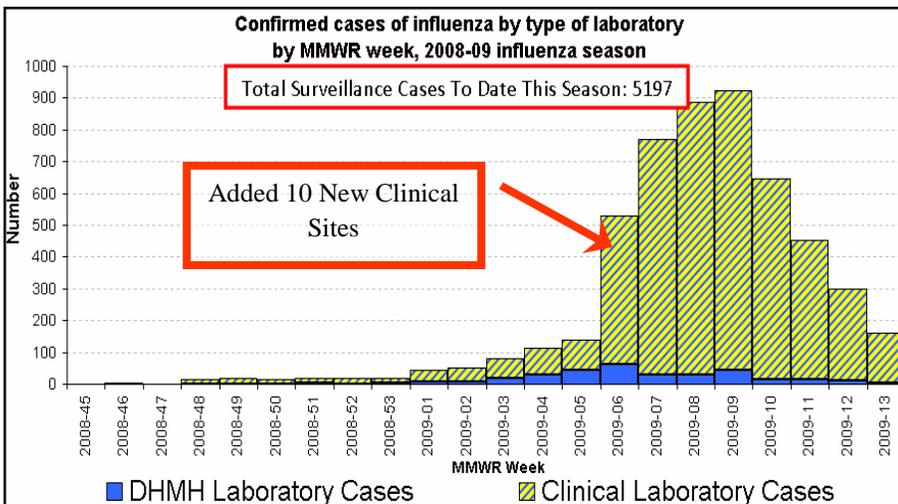
**MARYLAND DHMH LABORATORIES ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

During week 13, a total of 4 specimens were submitted for testing at the DHMH laboratory. Two (50%) were positive for influenza: Type A (0, 0%) and Type B (2, 50%). This season, a total of 802 specimens have been submitted for testing at the DHMH laboratory. Of these, 315 (39%) have been positive by PCR and/or viral culture.

**CONFIRMED INFLUENZA CASES (5,197) AND STRAIN TYPING**

For the purpose of influenza surveillance, cases are counted as “confirmed” when they are based on more reliable reference test methods (PCR or culture) performed by the DHMH lab, or are based on other techniques such as rapid test for the detection of influenza antigen AFTER the DHMH lab has confirmed its first case of the season.

This is done because the sensitivity and specificity of rapid flu tests vary with the prevalence of influenza in the population<sup>1</sup>, and are less reliable when prevalence is low. This season, all positive clinical laboratory results from week 46 onward (4,882) are counted as confirmed cases, and of course, all of the positive DHMH lab results (315).



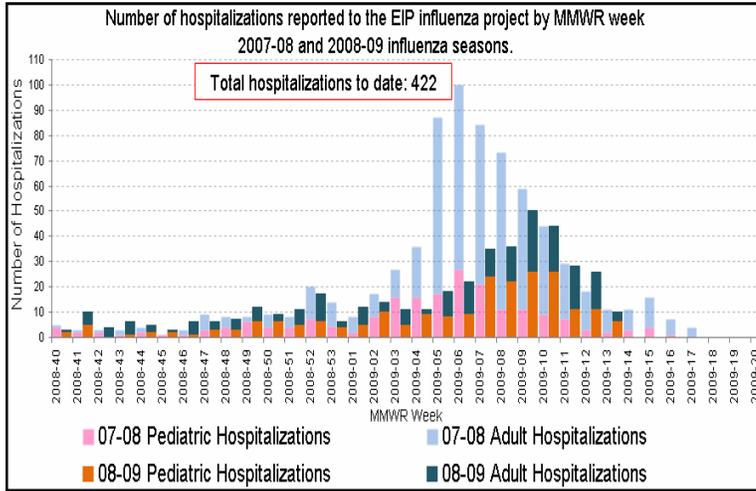
| Influenza Type | No.        | %           |
|----------------|------------|-------------|
| Type A         | 2          | <1%         |
| Type A (H1)    | 148        | 47%         |
| Type A (H3)    | 6          | 2%          |
| Type B         | 158        | 50%         |
| Types A & B    | 1          | <1%         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>315</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Number of positive influenza tests performed by the DHMH laboratory by virus type, 2008-09 Influenza Season.

1-For more information, please read: “Rapid Diagnostic Testing for Influenza”, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://tinyurl.com/cdcrapids>  
 For more information on the different types of influenza viruses, please read: <http://tinyurl.com/cdcfluvirus>

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**EMERGING INFECTIONS PROGRAM (EIP) INFLUENZA PROJECT**



Twenty-one hospitals in the Baltimore Metro Region provide information to EIP on the number of hospitalizations associated with influenza on a weekly basis during the flu season.

422 (204, 48% adult, and 218, 52% pediatric) hospitalizations for influenza reported to DHMH.

During week 13, 10 hospitalizations, 6 children and 4 adults, were reported to EIP.

Last season, 715 (516, 72% adult, and 199, 28% pediatric) hospitalizations were reported.

For more information on the program, please contact Maya Monroe, MPH, EIP Epidemiologist at 410-767-6700.

To date, there have been

**DIVISION OF OUTBREAK INVESTIGATION REPORTS**

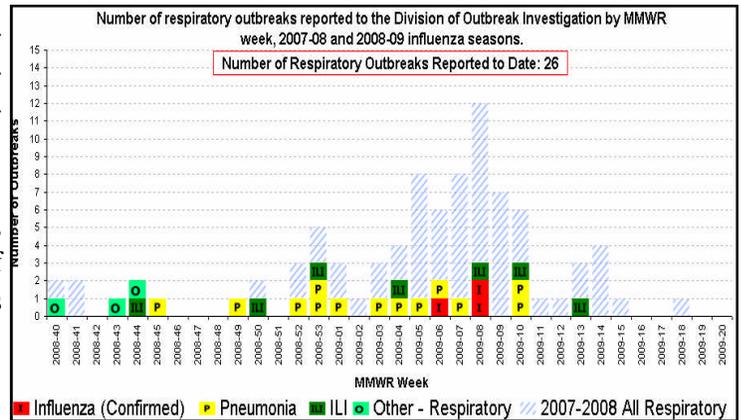
During week 13, one outbreak of influenza-like illness was reported to the Division of Outbreak Investigation. To date, there have been 26 respiratory outbreaks reported this flu season.

breaks in general are reportable to DHMH. Please contact your local health department to report an outbreak.

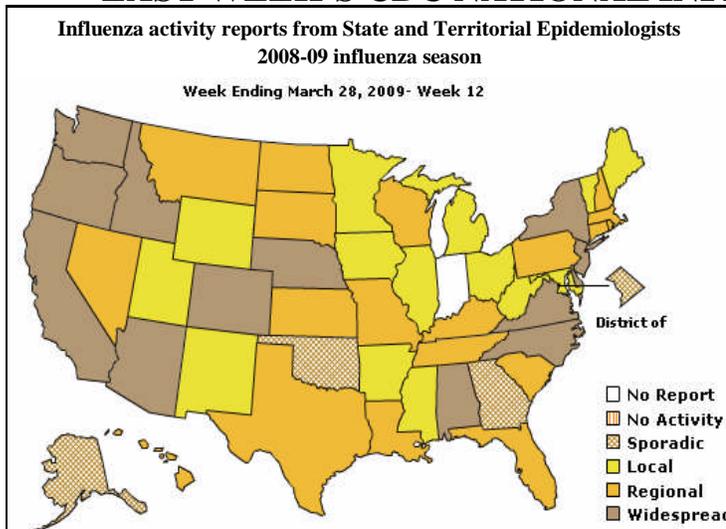
For more information, please visit the Division of Outbreak Investigations web page at:

<http://tinyurl.com/edcpoutb>

Although influenza is not a reportable condition in Maryland, disease out-



**LAST WEEK'S CDC NATIONAL INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE REPORT**



According to CDC, “during week 12, influenza activity decreased continued to decrease in the United States.”

- Visits to sentinel providers for ILI are above baseline nationally.
- 13 States reported “widespread” influenza activity; 19 states reported “regional” flu activity; 14 states reported “local” activity.

- 16.8% of specimens tested by national laboratories were positive for influenza.
- Eight pediatric deaths due to influenza were reported to CDC. The total now stands at 43 reported cases this season.

For more information, visit: <http://cdc.gov/flu/weekly>

**Division of Communicable  
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**HEALTHY PEOPLE HEALTY COMMUNITIES**

All information submitted to DHMH through the surveillance systems is voluntary. This information is used to estimate the geographic extent of flu activity, and not the virulence or pathogenicity of circulating viruses. This information is not intended for individual diagnoses.

**ALL INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS MORE DATA IS SUBMITTED AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THIS REPORT**

If you have any questions about influenza surveillance in Maryland, or you would like to join our Influenza Sentinel Provider Network, please contact Rene F. Najera, MPH, Epidemiologist at the Division of Communicable Disease Surveillance in the Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control Programs.

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!!!**

[WWW.EDCP.ORG](http://WWW.EDCP.ORG)

**More Flu News**

According to an article in the MMWR Weekly Report, April 3, 2009, ([tinyurl.com/southflu](http://tinyurl.com/southflu)), "this year the influenza virus strains represented in the 2008--09 northern hemisphere influenza vaccine currently available in the United States are identical to the strains represented in influenza vaccines intended for use in 2009 in the southern hemisphere." For this reason, travelers to the southern hemisphere should touch base with their healthcare providers and get the flu vaccine before traveling. Flu season in the southern hemisphere is from April to September.

Health authorities in Oakland County, Michigan, are asking parents to be on the lookout for flu-like symptoms in their children after the deaths of two children. The deaths were in some way associated with influenza. ([tinyurl.com/michflu](http://tinyurl.com/michflu)) According to the article, "The state has reported 269 influenza cases so from the 2008-09 season. The state's only flu-related death was a child." It is a common perception that flu season ends when the cold weather subsides. However, Maryland has seen increased flu activity well into April and even May in the past.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the use of a rapid test to detect type A H5N1 influenza in humans. ([tinyurl.com/fdah5n1](http://tinyurl.com/fdah5n1)) According to the news release, the test takes about 40 minutes to give a result, and the samples used are the same as those used today for rapid flu detection (throat or nose swabs). Current rapid flu tests take about 15 minutes to give a result, and many of them can differentiate between types A and B flu viruses. In Maryland, we rely on the DHMH Laboratories Administration to identify the particular strain of an isolated virus (e.g. H1N1 or H3N2).

| WEEK    | ACTIVITY   |
|---------|------------|
| 2009-07 | Widespread |
| 2009-08 | Widespread |
| 2009-09 | Regional   |
| 2009-10 | Regional   |
| 2009-11 | Regional   |
| 2009-12 | Local      |
| 2009-13 | Local      |

Influenza activity in Maryland according to DHMH

