



MARYLAND INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE REPORT Week 50 (December 7 to December 13, 2008)

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

- Influenza activity in Maryland remains “**SPORADIC**” with visits to providers for influenza-like illness (ILI) below baseline and only a few positive clinical laboratory influenza tests reported as positive.
- 3.6% of participants in the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey reported flu-like symptoms. 3.5% of visits to sentinel providers were due to ILI.

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OUTPATIENT INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS (ILI) SURVEILLANCE NETWORK

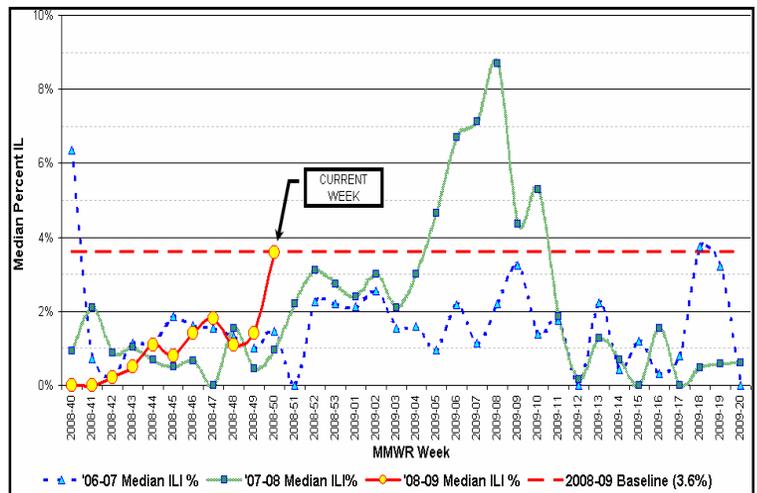
This week, a total of 34 visits for ILI were reported by 6 providers. The median percent of ILI visits in Maryland was 3.5%. This is **below** the state baseline of 3.6%.

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 or by phone at 410-767-6700.

Median percent of visits to sentinel providers in Maryland by MMWR Week, 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 Influenza Seasons



MARYLAND RESIDENT INFLUENZA TRACKING SURVEY RESULTS

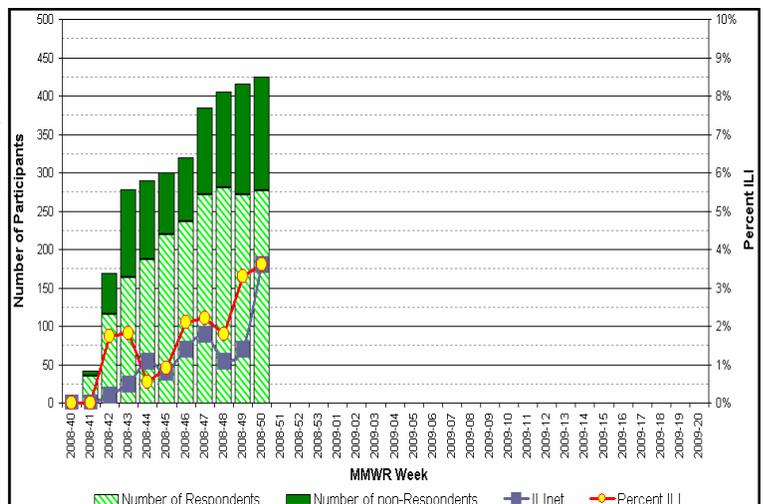
A total of 425 participants signed up at <http://tinyurl.com/flu-enroll> by the end of week 50. Of the 425 residents who received the weekly survey, 277 (65%) responded to it. Among the respondents, 10 (3.6%) reported flu-like symptoms. **A total of 4 (1.4%) of the respondents reported getting their flu vaccine this week.**

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.

Number of participants and respondents and percent ILI by MMWR week reported to the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey, 2008-09 influenza season

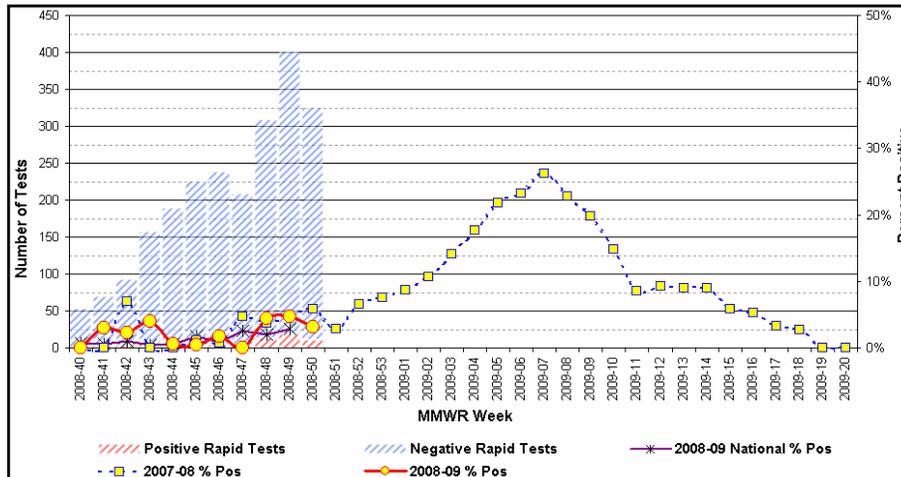


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MARYLAND CLINICAL LABORATORY INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE

During week 50, a total of 324 rapid influenza tests were reported by 14 reporting clinical laboratories. Of these, **10 tests (3.1%) were positive.**

Clinical laboratory test results and percent positive reported to DHMH by MMWR week
2007-08 and 2008-09 influenza seasons



MARYLAND DHMH LABORATORIES ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

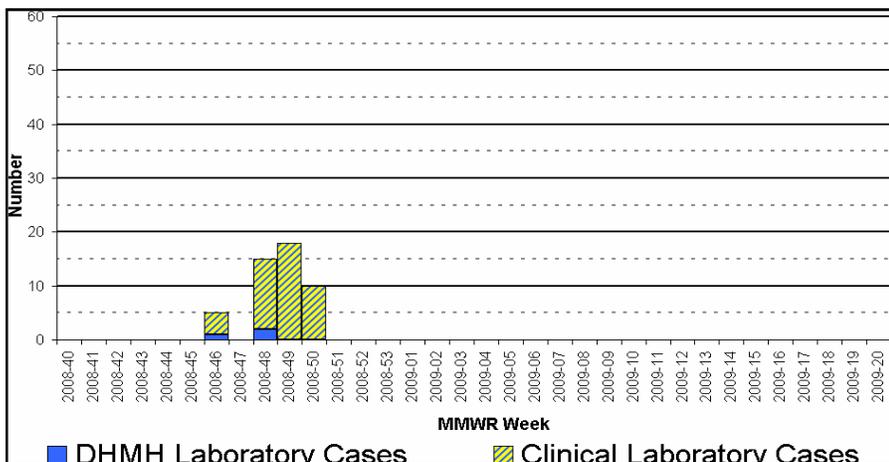
During week 50, a total of 20 specimens were submitted for testing at the DHMH laboratory. None of these were positive for influenza. This season, a total of 95 specimens have been submitted for testing at the DHMH laboratory. Of these, 3 (3.2%) have been positive by PCR. Two specimens (2.1%) were positive for influenza Type B, and one specimen (1.1%) was positive for influenza Type A.

CONFIRMED INFLUENZA CASES (48) 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*, and are less reliable when prevalence is low. This season, all positive clinical laboratory results from week 46 onward (45) are counted as confirmed cases, and of course, all the positive DHMH lab results (3).

Confirmed cases of influenza by type of reporting laboratory by MMWR week
2008-09 influenza season



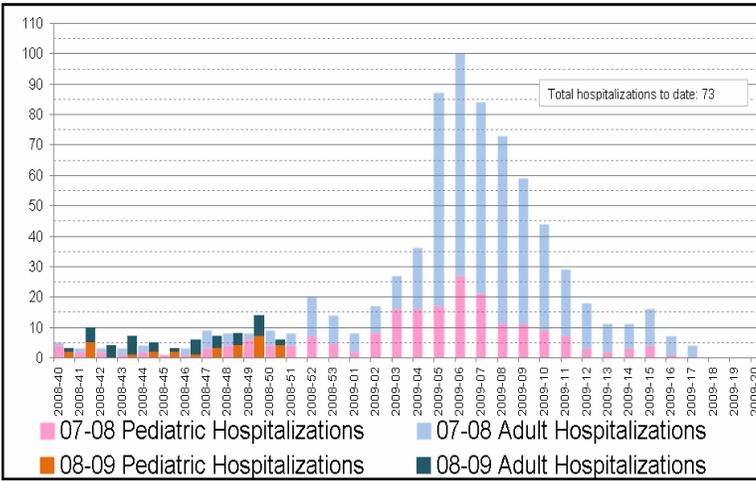
The three positive specimens identified by the DHMH lab have been typed as influenza B (2, 67%) and influenza A (1, 33%). To date, the CDC laboratory has identified one as type A (H1N1) Brisbane-like and another as type B Florida-like. Both strains **are** components of this season’s influenza vaccine. The type A (H1N1) isolate was found to be resistant to Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) but sensitive to Adamantanes and Zanamivir. The CDC recommendations for the use of Oseltamivir have not changed.

* 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

Number of hospitalizations reported to the EIP influenza project by MMWR week, 2007-08 and 2008-09 influenza seasons.



This week, a total of 6 hospitalizations were reported to DHMH. Of these, 2 (33%) were adults (over 18 years of age) and 4 (67%) were children.

EIP collects the number of hospitalizations associated with influenza on a weekly basis from 21 hospitals in the Baltimore Metro Region .

To date, there have been 73 (58% adult, 42% pediatric) hospitalizations for influenza reported to DHMH. Last season, 715 (72% adult, 28% pediatric) hospitalizations were reported.

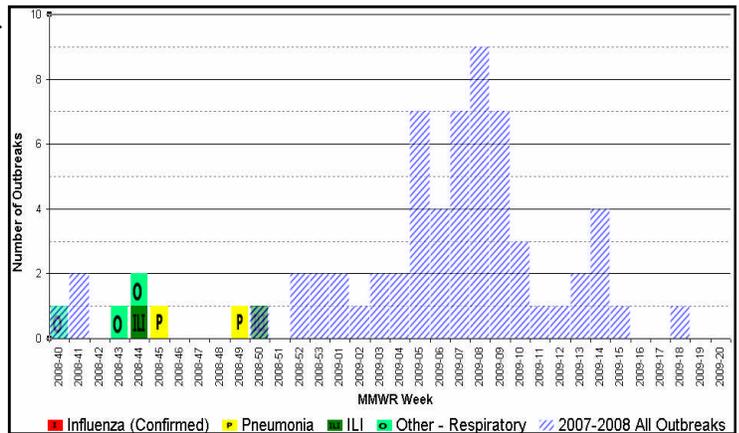
DIVISION OF OUTBREAK INVESTIGATIONS REPORTS

One outbreak of influenza-like illness was reported to the Division of Outbreak Investigations this week.

Although influenza is not a reportable condition in Maryland, disease outbreaks in general are reportable to DHMH. Please contact your local health department to report an out-

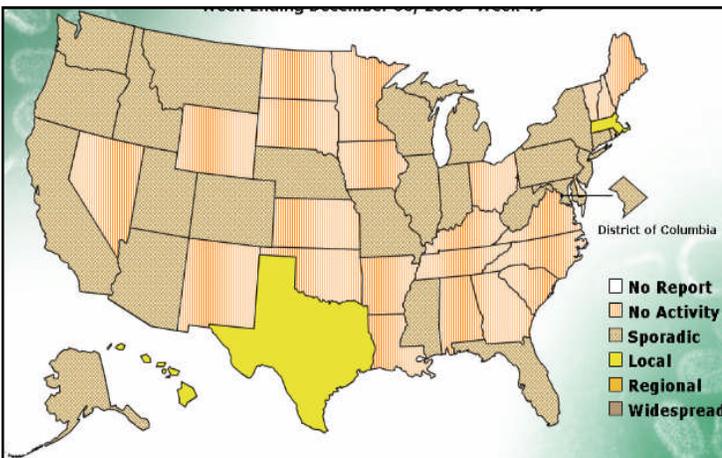
break. For more information, please visit the Division of Outbreak Investigations web page at: <http://tinyurl.com/edcpoutb>

Number of respiratory outbreaks reported to the Division of Outbreak Investigations by MMWR week, 2007-08 and 2008-09 influenza seasons.



CDC NATIONAL INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE REPORT

Influenza activity reports from State and Territorial Epidemiologists 2008-09 influenza season



According to CDC, “during week 49, a low level of influenza activity was reported in the United States.”

- Visits to sentinel providers are below baseline.
- Three states reported “local” flu activity.
- 24 states (including Maryland), DC, and Puerto Rico reported

“sporadic” influenza activity (the other states reported “no activity”).

- About 2.8% of specimens tested were positive for influenza.
- No pediatric deaths due to influenza were reported during week 48.

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

HEALTHY PEOPLE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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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

BETTER GRADES THROUGH FLU VACCINES

Last week, I mentioned the record-setting flu vaccination campaign undertaken by the University of Minnesota back in October. Over 11,500 students were immunized against influenza (<http://tinyurl.com/fluminn>). According to a study also from the University of Minnesota, “vaccinated students are:

- 46 percent less likely to miss a class.
- 40 percent less likely to botch an assignment.
- 47 percent less likely to have a bad test.
- 47 percent less likely to have to go to the doctor.”

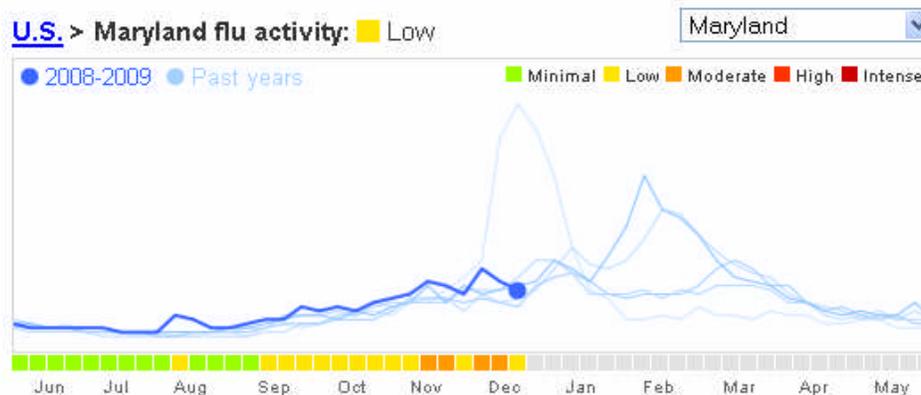
This all translates into better grades, it is implied, because the students are in class and healthy enough to do all their coursework (<http://tinyurl.com/flustudents>) (<http://tinyurl.com/flustudents2>).

Cohorts of over 2,800 students were followed for 4 years at the University and at Olaf College. At least 24% of them reported one instance of influenza-like illness during the 4 years. According to the researchers, vaccination translated to statistically significant reductions in instances of influenza-like illness.

Perhaps most interesting was the finding that only about 30% of the

college students followed in the study were vaccinated at any time during the study period. While the “magic number” to achieve herd immunity varies with the setting, 30% is nowhere near the required proportion of vaccinations.

With over 51,000 students enrolled at the University of Minnesota, the record number of vaccines (11,500) is only about 22% of the student population. Of course, other students may have been vaccinated elsewhere, but, encouraging as these findings are, they still show that more work needs to be done.



Google Flu Trends (<http://www.google.org/flutrends>): After two weeks at “moderate” flu activity, Google’s Flu Trends places Maryland back at “Low” flu activity.