

# Influenza Watch – San Diego County, California

## 2004-05 Influenza Season Summary

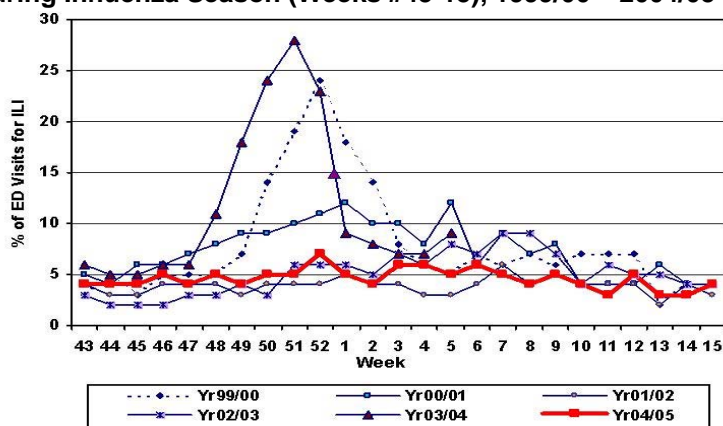
San Diego County had a mild 2004-05 influenza season (October 3, 2004 through May 21, 2005). This is similar to mild to moderate levels seen throughout the United States. Influenza detections reported to the Public Health Laboratory (PHL) were sporadic and peaked slightly during weeks 2 – 7 (January 9 – February 19, 2005). The percent of emergency department visits for influenza-like-illness also reflected a mild level respiratory illness during the influenza season (Figure 1), and school absenteeism and pre-hospital transports also remained at or below expected levels throughout the duration of the season.

The San Diego County Public Health Laboratory (PHL) confirmed and characterized 51 influenza A and influenza B isolates submitted by participating providers throughout San Diego county. Of the 43 influenza A isolates characterized, 42 were subtyped to be influenza A(H3N2) and one was influenza A(H1N1). All influenza A(H3N2) isolates were identified as a new strain, A/California/7/2004-like, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The influenza A(H1N1) isolate was typed as A/New Caledonia/20/99-like (the vaccine strain) by the State Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL). Of the eight influenza B isolates characterized by the State VRDL, seven were B/Shanghai/361/02-like (the vaccine strain) and one was B/Sichuan (antigenically similar to the vaccine strain).

## Upcoming 2005-06 Season Recommendations

The recommended 2005-06 trivalent vaccine virus strains include A/California/7/2004 (H3N2)-like, A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1)-like, and B/Shanghai/361/2002-like viral antigens. Updated CDC vaccination recommendations for the 2005-06 season include the addition of persons with conditions leading to compromise of the respiratory system and emphasis on the vaccination of health-care workers in addition to previously identified priority groups.

**Figure 1. Percent of Influenza-Like-Illness Visits to Sentinel Emergency Departments in San Diego County During Influenza Season (Weeks #43-15), 1999/00 – 2004/05**



## Ongoing Surveillance for Acute Respiratory Illnesses

Influenza surveillance in San Diego County continues year-round. Physicians and laboratories are encouraged to participate by reporting positive influenza detections to the Public Health Laboratory by phone (619-692-8500) or fax (619-692-8558). Additionally, due to ongoing occurrence of avian influenza A (H5N1) infections among poultry and humans in Southeast Asia, enhanced influenza surveillance recommendations include rapid influenza testing for the following: 1) hospitalized patients with both a) radiographically confirmed pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), or other unidentified severe respiratory illness AND b) history of travel in the past 10 days to a country with documented H5N1 in poultry or humans, OR 2) hospitalized or ambulatory patients with a) fever >100°F, b) one or more upper respiratory infection symptom (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath), AND c) history of contact with poultry or known or suspected human case of influenza A (H5N1) in a known-affected country within 10 days prior to symptom onset.

For more information regarding influenza surveillance in SD County, please contact Community Epidemiology at: [EpiDiv.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:EpiDiv.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov) or (619) 515-6620.