

Influenza Surveillance in San Diego County

Within San Diego County, influenza surveillance continues year round. The Community Epidemiology Branch, Immunization Program and Public Health Laboratory, in cooperation with area hospitals, medical practitioners and schools, have established a multi-prong approach to detection of influenza in San Diego County.

Purpose for Surveillance:

Influenza disease is not a legally reportable disease within California. Effective public health intervention is dependent upon early detection of circulating strains and monitoring of the disease impact within the community. The County's influenza surveillance program has several different components which allows:

- Identification of when influenza activity is occurring in the County
- Determining which types of influenza viruses are circulating
- Monitoring the impact influenza is having on the population
- Measurement of the impact influenza is having on emergency departments in the County
- Identification of influenza associated deaths in the County

Surveillance Activities:

1. Influenza Virus Detection and Characterization

- Sentinel clinics using rapid antigen influenza tests
- Collecting reports of positive detections from the medical community
- Public health lab confirmatory testing
- Public health lab sub-typing of specimens
- Public health lab/state strain typing to assess vaccine match

2. Reporting of Severe Pediatric Influenza Cases

- Report to Community Epidemiology: Any case 0-17 years with confirmed influenza by laboratory testing, and have been hospitalized in the PICU or died at any location

3. Surveillance & Data Collection

- Percent of influenza-like-illness visits to emergency departments
- School absenteeism from 80+ schools
- Review of death certificates for influenza associated deaths
- Review of other respiratory indicators from syndromic surveillance

4. Surveillance Updates and Information

- Weekly [Influenza Watch](#) report emailed to interested persons
- Regular updates to the medical community through EMAN
- Information used in HHSA reports and press releases

Participation:

Physicians and laboratories are encouraged to participate by reporting positive influenza detections or submitting specimens from patients who tested positive using rapid influenza tests. Please report detections to the public health lab by phone at 619-692-8500 or by fax at 619-692-8558

More Information:

For more information about influenza surveillance in San Diego County, please contact Jeff Johnson or Brit Colanter at 619-515-6620. For information about laboratory influenza isolation and detection, please contact Jill Giesick at 619-692-8587.