

Influenza Summary Update (for the week ending November 27, 1999--Week 47)

The following information may be quoted:

Synopsis: Since October 3, 1999, laboratory-confirmed influenza A virus infections have been reported in 44 states and influenza B infections have been reported in 4 states. During week 47 (November 21 through November 27), 12% of specimens tested by WHO and NREVSS laboratories for influenza were positive. State and territorial epidemiologists from 7 states reported regional influenza activity, and 37 other states reported sporadic influenza activity. Sentinel physician reports of influenza-like illness were within baseline levels of 0% to 3%. The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was above the epidemic threshold for week 47.

U.S. World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) Collaborating Laboratory Reports:* During week 47, WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 681 specimens tested for influenza viruses, of which 80 (12%) were positive. Seventeen were influenza A(H3N2) viruses and 63 were unsubtyped influenza A viruses.

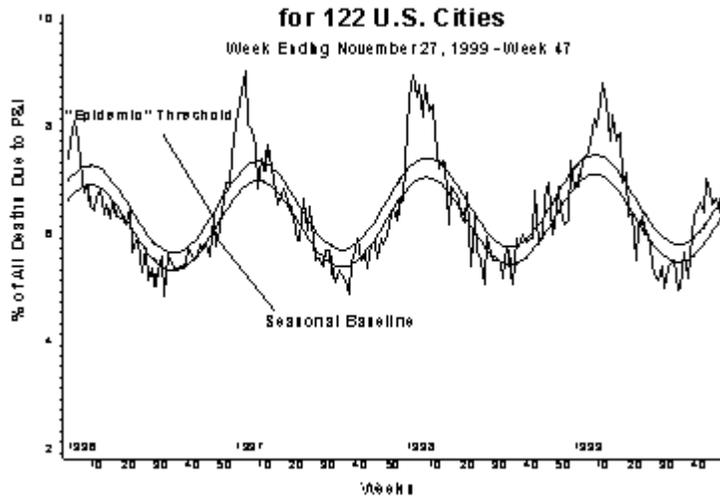
Since October 3, WHO and NREVSS laboratories have tested a total of 10,722 respiratory specimens, and 482 (4%) have yielded influenza virus isolates. Four hundred seventy-eight (99%) of the 482 isolates identified were influenza type A and 4 (1%) were influenza type B. Two hundred nine (44%) of the 478 influenza A isolates have been subtyped and all were A(H3N2). Influenza A isolates have been reported by WHO and NREVSS laboratories from 42 states and influenza B isolates from 2 states.

Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza from Other Sources: Since October 3, in addition to the viruses reported through the WHO/NREVSS system, laboratory-confirmed influenza A virus infections were reported from 2 additional states, and influenza B infections were reported from 2 additional states.

Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality:* During week 47, the proportion of deaths due to pneumonia and influenza as reported by the vital statistics offices of 122 U.S. cities was 7.0%. This percentage is above the epidemic threshold of 6.8% for week 47. The percentage of pneumonia and influenza deaths exceeded threshold values for this time of year for the 9 of the past 10 weeks. Whether this increase in the percentage of pneumonia and influenza deaths is due to early influenza activity, respiratory illness due to some other pathogen, or reporting changes under way in the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System is unknown. However, because these changes include a revision of the reporting case definition, the current increase in pneumonia and influenza mortality should be interpreted with caution.

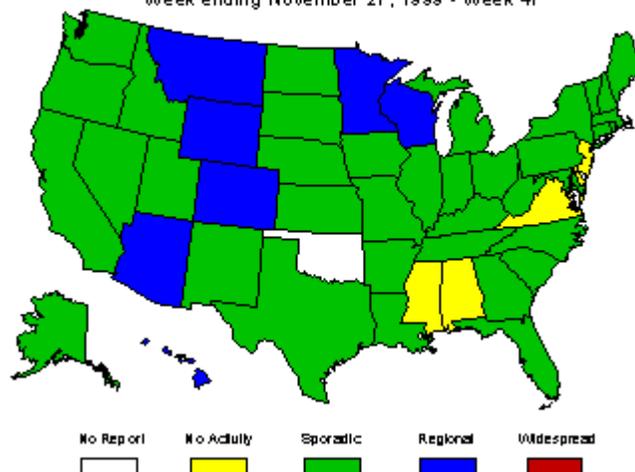
Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality

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Influenza Activity as Assessed by State and Territorial Epidemiologists:** During week 47, influenza activity was reported as regional in 7 states (Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Minnesota, Montana, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) and Puerto Rico. Thirty-seven states (Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia reported sporadic influenza activity. Five states reported no influenza activity and 1 did not report.

Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates Reported
by State & Territorial Epidemiologists
Week ending November 27, 1999 - Week 47



Influenza Morbidity Reports from U.S. Sentinel Physicians*: During week 47, 2% of patient visits to U.S. sentinel physicians were due to influenza-like illness, and the proportion ranged from 1% to 3% in the 9 surveillance regions. These percentages are within the baseline levels of 0% to 3%.

*Reporting is incomplete for this week, so numbers and percentages may change as more reports are received.

**Influenza activity is defined as influenza-like illness and/or culture-confirmed influenza.

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