

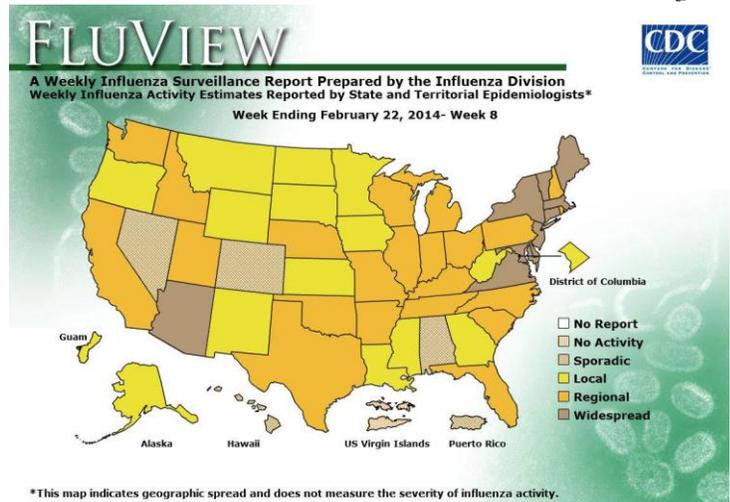


Orange County Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment, 1719 W. 17<sup>th</sup> St. Santa Ana, CA 92706, (714) 834-8180

**Influenza activity has decreased in recent weeks but remains elevated in California and the US.** Clinicians should continue to offer flu vaccine for all patients 6 months of age and older. For a list of locations offering flu vaccine, visit [www.ochealthinfo.com/flu](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/flu).

### Influenza Update:

- **In the US:** While influenza activity continues to decrease, it remains elevated nationally. Influenza activity may continue for a number of weeks, especially in parts of the country where activity started later. During Week 8 (ending February 22), most states reported 'regional\*' geographic influenza activity. Ten states reported widespread flu activity, most in the northeastern part of the country. Both outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) and deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza are still above baseline. Approximately 11% of respiratory specimens tested positive for influenza.



- **In California:** Influenza activity is decreasing, but remains elevated. During Week 8, influenza activity was downgraded to 'regional', and the percentage of influenza detections decreased to 15%.
- **In Orange County:** The number of influenza reports has decreased in recent weeks. Severe influenza cases (ICU/death) under 65 years of age continue to be reported. Four new influenza-related deaths were reported during the previous two weeks. Currently, there are 55 severe cases, including 16 deaths. ILI outpatient visits have been decreasing in recent weeks and are at expected levels.

\*Regional geographic spread: Outbreaks of influenza or increases in ILI and recent laboratory confirmed influenza in at least two but less than half the regions of the state with recent laboratory evidence of influenza in those regions

- **This season's flu vaccine decreased the likelihood of having to see a doctor for influenza by about 60% for all age groups.** Even with moderate effectiveness of about 60%, flu vaccination can reduce flu-related illness, antibiotic use, time lost from work, hospitalizations and deaths. For information on CDC's mid-season vaccine effectiveness estimate: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/effectivenessqa-2013-14.htm>
- **The World Health Organization recommends keeping the same strains for the Northern Hemisphere's 2014-15 flu season vaccine.**
  - an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus (*note correction from H1H1 initially sent*)
  - an A/Texas/50/2012 (H3N2)-like virus
  - a B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus
  - and for the quadrivalent (four-strain) vaccines: a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus (Victoria lineage).
- **Influenza-Associated Intensive-Care Unit Admissions and Deaths - California, September 29, 2013-January 18, 2014:** The 405 reports of severe cases were more than in any season since the 2009 pandemic. A comorbid condition predisposing to severe influenza was identified in 93% of those with fatal illness. The most commonly noted conditions were diabetes mellitus 25%, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease 20%, asthma 14%, and morbid obesity 14%. For more information, see: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6307a2.htm>.
- **CDC Flu Webinar on the importance of flu vaccination for individuals with chronic conditions:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7gx8vj5MQA&feature=youtu.be>.

If you have any comments about this flyer, contact Sandra Okubo, MPH or Michele Cheung, MD at (714) 834-8180. To receive this newsletter by email, please contact us at [epi@ochca.com](mailto:epi@ochca.com).