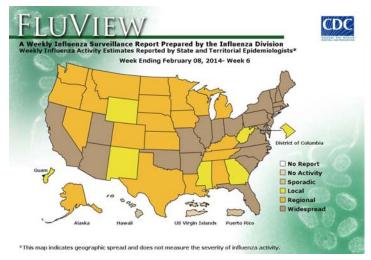


Orange County Health Care Agency, Epidemiology & Assessment, 1719 W. 17th St. Santa Ana, CA 92706, (714) 834-8180

Influenza activity remains elevated in the US despite a decrease in several surveillance indicators. Clinicians should continue to offer flu vaccine as long as influenza viruses are circulating. For a list of locations offering flu vaccine, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/flu. New editions of Eye on Influenza will continue to be distributed throughout the season, with frequency depending on activity.

Influenza Update:

- In the US: Some states that saw earlier increases in flu activity are now beginning to see decreases.
 - Other states are continuing to see high levels of flu activity. During Week 6, influenza activity was widespread in 24 states, including California. Flu activity is likely to continue at elevated levels for several more weeks. Anyone aged 6 months and older who has not gotten a flu vaccine yet this season should get one now.
- In California: Influenza activity is decreasing, but remains high. Influenza-like illness (ILI) outpatient visits remained above expected levels for this time of year. The percentage of influenza detections decreased from Week 5; however, greater than 20% of clinical respiratory specimens continued to test positive for influenza.



- In Orange County: A total of 52 severe influenza cases (ICU/death) under 65 years of age have been reported so far this season, including 12 deaths. ILI outpatient visits have decreased from previous weeks, but remain elevated at 3.1%. Orange County continues to receive reports of respiratory outbreaks in congregate settings.
 - o For Guidance for School Administrators to Help Reduce the Spread of Seasonal Influenza in K-12 Schools: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/guidance.htm
 - For Interim Guidance for Influenza Outbreak Management in Long-Term Care Facilities: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/ltc-facility-guidance.htm
- **Protect moms and babies from influenza.** Pregnant and post-partum women and children younger than 5, especially those children younger than 2, are at high risk for complications from influenza.
 - o Letter to Providers: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/pregnancy-letter-2014.pdf.
 - O During the H1N1 pandemic pregnant women were 4 times more likely to be hospitalized than their non-pregnant counterparts and represented 5% of flu deaths when they make up only 1% of the population. This season to date, data from the Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Network revealed that 21.8% of the 301 adult women of child-bearing age hospitalized with confirmed influenza in the participating areas were pregnant.
 - The flu shot is a safe way to protect mom and her unborn child from serious illness and complications from the flu. Passive immunity can protect children for the first 6 months of life before they can be vaccinated.
 - Text4baby is a free mobile health information service for pregnant women and new parents. Receive flu shot reminders as well as personalized health information. Text 'baby' to 511411 (Bebe for Spanish) for three personalized text messages per week timed to the mother's due date and baby's birthday.
 - o Annual flu vaccination is also important for parents and caregivers of children less than 6 months of age who cannot be vaccinated.

CDC webinar briefing on the importance of flu vaccination for pregnant women and young children: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gjrf7hbIiE&feature=youtu.be.