



Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Division of Disease Control

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Health Advisory

First Influenza Case Confirmed in Philadelphia October 30, 2006

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Division of Disease Control (DDC) conducts surveillance for respiratory viruses circulating in the region by collecting reports of viruses identified from clinical virology laboratories serving Philadelphia. Last week, the first case of influenza A infection, detected by PCR, was reported from one of these sentinel laboratories. This case may indicate the beginning of influenza transmission in the region. Generally, peak influenza transmission lasts between 6-8 weeks.

As of October 21st, sporadic influenza activity was reported by New York City, Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, and Texas; local activity was reported in Hawaii and Louisiana. To date, no confirmed cases of influenza have been identified in other areas of Pennsylvania.

A total of 32 influenza isolates have been typed by the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention laboratories: 24 (75.0%) were influenza A viruses and 8 (25.0%) were influenza B viruses. Twenty-two (91.7%) of the 24 influenza A viruses have been subtyped: 18 (81.8%) were influenza A (H1) viruses and 4 (18.2%) were influenza A (H3) viruses. The subtype of the Philadelphia influenza isolate is not yet known.

Influenza vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza. Vaccination of individuals at high risk for influenza complications should continue as long as influenza is circulating in the community.

CDC recommends influenza vaccine for individuals in the following categories this season:

- All children 6 to 59 months of age
- Adults 50 years of age and older
- Adults and children with chronic cardiovascular or pulmonary conditions, including asthma
- Adults and children who have required regular medical follow-up or hospitalization during the preceding year because of chronic metabolic diseases, renal dysfunction, hemoglobinopathies, or immunodeficiency
- Adults and children who have any condition that can compromise respiratory function or the handling of respiratory secretions or that can increase the risk for aspiration, including seizure disorders
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents and staff of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- Children aged 6 months to 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy
- Health-care workers involved in direct patient care
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children from 0-59 months of age

Additional information about influenza is available at www.cdc.gov/flu/.

To request assistance with management of an influenza outbreak, please contact the Division of Disease Control by calling 215-685-6742 during normal business hours, or 215- 686-1776 after hours.