



# Philadelphia Department of Public Health Division of Disease Control

DONALD F. SCHWARZ, MD, MPH  
Deputy Mayor, Health & Opportunity  
Health Commissioner

NAN FEYLER, JD, MPH  
Chief of Staff

CAROLINE C. JOHNSON, MD  
Director, Division of Disease Control

## Health Advisory Influenza activity widespread in Philadelphia January 20, 2011

### Surveillance Summary

Since the start of 2011, significant increases in the number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported by local hospital laboratories (figure). In the past 2 weeks, over 12% of tested samples were positive for either influenza A or B. In the same period, emergency department and pediatric ambulatory clinic visits for influenza-like illnesses have increased beyond seasonal averages. Thus far, most of the influenza has been caused by influenza A/H3N2; however, roughly 20% of influenza isolates have been influenza B. No fatalities have been reported in Philadelphia residents, although flu-related deaths have been reported from surrounding counties.

Antigenic characterization at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention virology laboratory indicates that this year's vaccine appears to match all of the circulating influenza strains very well. **Vaccination**

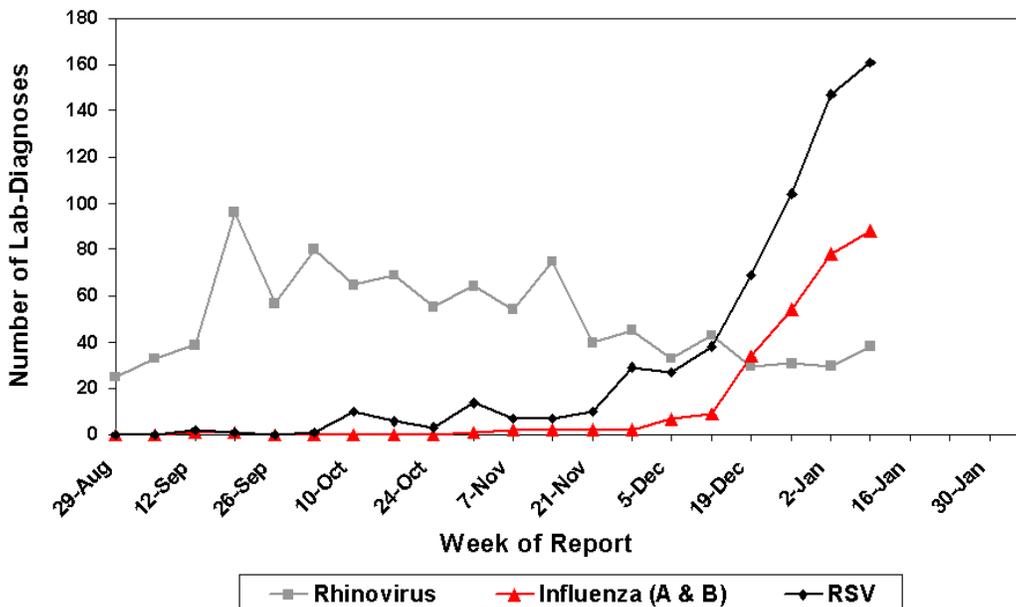
**remains the optimal way to prevent infection.** Annual vaccination is currently recommended for all persons 6 months of age or older. Vaccine is still widely available in Philadelphia. Flu vaccination clinic information is available at (215) 685-6458.

In addition to influenza, respiratory syncytial viruses (RSV) have also increased in circulation over the last several weeks (figure). Currently they are the most common viruses circulating in the community. The onset for RSV is very late this season (data not shown). Often the peak of RSV activity occurs at the end of December – beginning of January.

Providers are reminded that all institutional outbreaks of respiratory illness, and hospitalized or fatal cases of influenza are to be reported to DDC. Reporting forms are posted on the Health Information Portal and can be faxed to DDC at (215) 238-6947 or called in via (215) 685-6740.

### Weekly Laboratory-Based Surveillance for Influenza, RSV, and Rhinovirus: Philadelphia, 2010-2011 Season

Based on data from 6 local hospital virology laboratories



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Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Division of Disease Control • 500 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146  
215-685-6740 (phone) • 215-686-4514 (after hours) • 215-238-6947 (fax) • www.phila.gov/health/DiseaseControl • hip.phila.gov