

		Ontario Influenza Bulletin	Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Public Health Branch <i>Volume 7, Issue 19, 2004</i>
			

Week #10: Week Ending March 6, 2004

Influenza Activity in Ontario

Influenza activity in Ontario remained at low levels during the week ending March 06, 2004 (see map). The influenza activity levels in the 28 health units that reported were as follows: no activity -22 (79%), sporadic activity -3 (11%), localized activity -2 (7%) and only 1 health unit (3%) reported widespread influenza activity. There were 12 (1.6%) positive influenza isolations, (10 Flu A and 2 Flu B) of the 750 influenza tests that Ontario laboratories reported to the Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control (CIDPC), Health Canada. Between August 24, 2003 and March 06, 2004, these laboratories reported 4,454 influenza A and 19 influenza B isolates or detections (Table 1). Also reported during this season to date, are other respiratory isolates and detections shown in Table 1. Health units reported 43 laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases and 1 influenza B case through the Reportable Diseases Information System (RDIS) during this surveillance week (Table 2). The overall rate of influenza-like illness (ILI) reported by sentinel physicians in Ontario was 26.1/1,000. Since September 1, 2003 to March 6, 2004, 131 (130 Flu A, 1 Flu B) influenza-related deaths were reported in the province through RDIS. Table 3 shows data on the respiratory infection outbreaks in institutions reported to the Ministry by the health units between from October 27, 2003 to March 06, 2004. These include 23 respiratory infection outbreaks in institutions that met the provincial surveillance case definition and were reported during this surveillance period. Two (8.7%) outbreak were positive for influenza A (Table 4).

Table 1.

Indicator	2002-03 Season Week Ending March 8, 2003 (week 10) Season to Date**	2003-04 Season Week Ending March 06, 2004 (week 10) Season to Date***
CIDPC Laboratory Surveillance (Flu isolates)Total	744	4,473
Influenza A	734	4,454
Influenza B	10	19
Other respiratory Viruses		
RSV	1,520	1,361
PIV1	113	233
PIV2	17	147
PIV3	290	163
PIV4	3	6
Other PIVs	1	6
Adenoviruses	121	131
* % of Flu tests that were positive	3.1	1.6
+No. of ILI Visits to Sentinel Physicians (ILI Rate/1000 patients seen for all reasons)	40	26.1

Consistent with Health Canada year round surveillance periods (only for Laboratory Surveillance Data)

+ October 27, 2003 – March 06, 2004. *% of positive cases based on the total specimens submitted for the surveillance week.

Season to Date: August 24, 2002 – March 08, 2003. *Season to Date: August 24, 2003 – March 06, 2004.

Note: 16 public health and hospital laboratories in the Province report to the CIDPC.

Table 2. Week Ending March 06, 2004 Influenza Cases in Ontario Reported Through the Reportable Disease Information System (RDIS), 2003-2004 (September 1, 2003 to March 06, 2004)

Health Unit	Flu A Week 10 (Ending Mar. 06)	Flu A Week 9 (Ending Feb. 28)	Flu A Change (Week 10-Week 09)	Flu B (Season-to-date)
Algoma	136	136	0	
Brant	39	38	1	
Chatham-Kent	34	34	0	
Durham Region	177	177	0	1
Eastern Ontario	54	54	0	
Elgin-St. Thomas	16	16	0	
Grey-Bruce	93	89	4	
Haldimand-Norfolk Region	58	54	4	1
Haliburton-Kawartha	116	116	0	1
Halton Region	221	221	0	1
Hamilton City	416	415	1	
Hastings-Prince Edward	201	201	0	
Huron	42	42	0	
Kingston-Frontenac	95	95	0	
Lambton	46	46	0	
Leeds-Grenville	17	16	1	
Middlesex-London	79	79	0	
Muskoka-Parry Sound	85	85	0	
Niagara Region	201	201	0	
North Bay	83	83	0	
Northwestern	0	0	0	
Ottawa-Carleton	235	235	0	
Oxford	40	40	0	
Peel Region	531	531	0	2
Perth	49	49	0	
Peterborough	101	101	0	
Porcupine	94	94	0	
Renfrew	37	37	0	
Simcoe County	229	229	0	2
Sudbury	184	184	0	
Thunder Bay	29	29	0	
Timiskaming	43	43	0	
Toronto City	577	570	7	2
Waterloo Region	150	150	0	
Wellington-Dufferin	132	130	2	
Windsor-Essex	23	23	0	
York Region	317	295	22	2
	4,980	4,938	42	12
*42 new cases of influenza A and 1 case of influenza B were reported during Week 10				
(Based on 2001 Provincial Population Estimate)				
PROVINCIAL INFLUENZA CASES PER 100,000 (September 1,2003-March 06, 2004) = 43.8/100,000.				
PROVINCIAL INFLUENZA CASES PER 100,000 (September 1,2002-March 08, 2003) = 5.9/100,000.				

NOTE: RDIS Reporting is usually incomplete for the reporting week. Hence, numbers may change as more reports are received.

Table 3: Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions October 27, 2003 –March 06, 2004

Indicator	2003-04 Season Week Ending March 06, 2004 (week 10) Season to Date
Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions	
Total Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions	649
Influenza A Outbreaks	380
Flu A & other organisms	7
Other Organisms	40
Influenza B	0
No organism detected	176
Laboratory Results pending	46
*Declared Over	520
Influenza A	329
Flu A & other Organisms	7
Other Organisms	35
Reported as "N/A results pending" or no definitive laboratory results reported	6
No organism detected	143
Onset of illness in index case October 27/03 – March 06, 2004	504
Onset of illness in index case prior to October 27/03	16
**Ongoing Outbreaks	129
Influenza A	51
Other organisms	5
Laboratory results pending	40
No Organism detected	33
Categories & Types of Institutions	
LTCF 's (NH, HFA)	429
Combined (e.g. NH/HFA, NH/Hospital)	19
Unspecified	19
Hospitals (ACH, CCH, Psychiatric Hosp.)	54
Other (RHs, Children Residences, Developmentally Act Institutions/Jail)	131

* Declared over respiratory infection outbreaks = Appendix E (Final Report) has been received by the Ministry.

** Ongoing respiratory infection outbreaks = Appendix E not yet received or outbreak onset is recent and is still active.

Table 4. Institutional Influenza Outbreaks by Health Unit, Ontario, 2003-2004 for Week 10

Health Unit	Institution Type	Organism	Total # of Residents	# Ill Residents	RAR	Complications			SAR
						# Cases with Pneumonia	# Cases Hospitalized	# Deaths Cases	
Toronto	Hospital	Flu A	249	4	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Eastern Ontario	Hospital	Flu A	29	8	28	2	0	0	1

RAR: Resident Attack Rate (# of residents ill/total number of residents)*100.

SAR: Staff Attack Rate (# of staff ill/total number of staff)*100.

NH = nursing home; RH= retirement home; Combined facility consists of 2 or more types of institutions e.g. a NH section and a retirement home (RH) section; CCH = chronic care hospital; ACH= Acute Care Hospital; LTCF = long term care facility.

Federal FluWatch Sentinel Physician Surveillance Activity in Ontario

During Week 10 the overall rate of influenza-like illness (ILI) reported for Ontario through the Federal FluWatch system was 26.1 ILI patients seen per 1,000 patients that were seen by the sentinel physicians for all reasons, including ILI.

Canada: Summary for Week 10

Localized influenza activity was reported in Quebec and parts of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland while the rest of the country reported either sporadic or no activity. Across Canada, during the week ending March 6 (week 10), sentinel physicians reported 14 cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) per 1000 patient visits, which is below the expected range for this time of year.

Avian Situation in BC: Health Canada confirmed that on February 18th, 2004, routine laboratory surveillance of poultry identified avian influenza on a commercial breeder flock. Testing of samples confirmed the presence of low pathogenic avian influenza virus H7N3.

Subsequent testing also identified a highly pathogenic form in a younger flock. Nine individuals in contact with infected birds were placed under surveillance, five developed mild respiratory symptoms however all five tested negative for influenza A. Health Canada advises that

Canadian Food Inspection Agency updated information on this issue may be accessed at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/avflu/avflue.shtml>

Laboratory Confirmations:

Health Canada received 2,511 reports of laboratory tests for influenza, including 145 (5.8%) influenza A detections and 17 influenza B detections. The National Microbiology Laboratory has antigenically characterized 727 influenza viruses to date. Of these, 717 (98.6%) were influenza A viruses, including 690 (96.2%) A/Fujian/411/02(H3N2)-like. Ten (1.4%) were influenza B viruses, including two B/Hong Kong/330/2001-like and eight B/Sichuan/379/99-like.

Source: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/media/releases/2003/flu_statement.htm

Avian Flu and SARS: Health Canada Updated Information on SARS/Avian Flu (H5N1)

Health Canada provides updated reports on SARS and Avian Flu (H5N1) with links on important aspects. The information may be accessed at the following sites.

Source: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dqspsp/fluwatch/index.html>

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dqspsp/h5n1/index.html>

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dqspsp/tmp-pmv/pub_e.html

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/diseases/flu/avian.html>

Strain Characterization:

The National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) reported on strain characterization completed on influenza isolates submitted from October 1, 2003 to March 2, 2004 (Table 5). The Ontario laboratories have submitted a total of 335 viruses which have been characterized as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Strain Characterization Completed on Influenza Isolates in Canada

		Influenza Virus					
Province/Territory	Type A(H1N1) *A/New Caledonia/20/ 99-like	Type A(H3N2)		Type A(H1N2)	Type B		TOTAL
		A/Panama/ 2007/99-like	A/Fujian/411/02 -like		Hong Kong /330/01- like	Sichuan /379/99 -like	
Newfoundland			9				9
Prince Edward Island			5				5
Nova Scotia			21	1			22
New Brunswick			6				6
Quebec			55				55
Manitoba			16				16
Saskatchewan		14	61				75
Alberta		6	60				66
British Columbia	1	5	107				113
Yukon			2				2
North West Territory			2				2
Nunavut			6				6
ONTARIO			325		2	8	335
Total	1	25	675	1	2	8	712

Source: National Microbiology Laboratory (NML), Population and Public Health Branch (PPHB)

United States: CDC Update

Influenza activity remained low during the week of February 29-March 6, 2004. The percentage of patient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) remained below the national baseline (2.5%). During this surveillance week, mortality due to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) remained below the epidemic threshold (8.3%). Five (0.7%) of 713 specimens collected from throughout the United States were positive for influenza. There were no reports of widespread or regional influenza activity from state and territorial epidemiologists during this week. Two states reported local activity, 31 states, New York City, Guam and Puerto Rico reported sporadic activity, and 17 states and the District of Columbia reported no influenza activity.

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

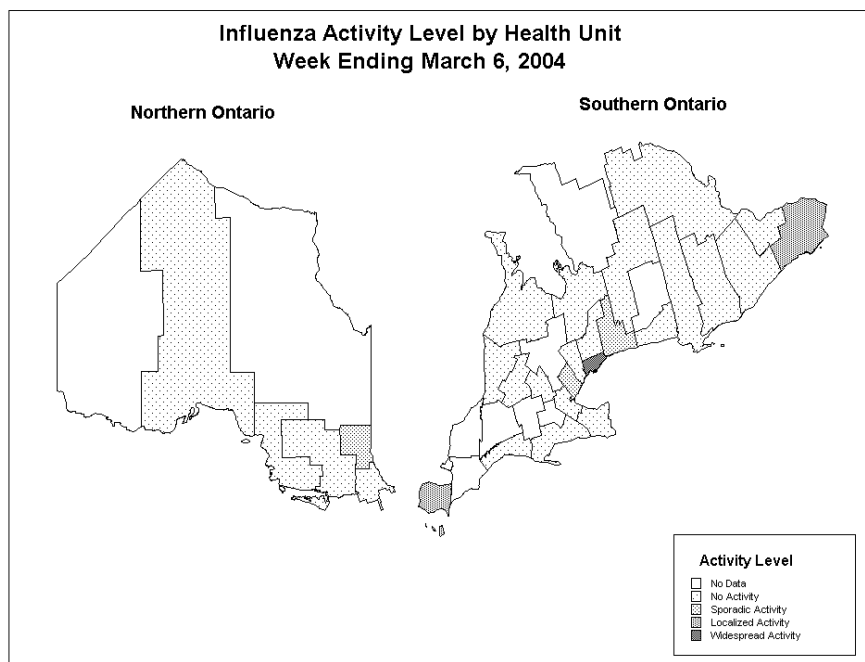
International:

WHO and EISS: Influenza A activity continued to decline in Europe.

Avian Influenza (WHO): Regarding the H5N1, WHO noted that poultry culling and other measures might have reduced the likelihood of a human pandemic influenza strain emerging soon. However, since the outbreaks appear in cycles, a human influenza pandemic is still expected some time in the future. The WHO was to convene a meeting of experts to assess the situation and to analyse possible public health interventions before and during an influenza pandemic.

EISS: <http://www.eiss.org>

WHO H5N1 Update: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/



Visit the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website weekly for the current issue, or back issues, of the Ontario Influenza Bulletin:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/pubhealth/flu/flu_03/flubul_mn.html