



# National Influenza Vaccine Summit

## *Influenza Activity Spotlights*

Monday, January 30, 2012

Issue #12

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**Professional Medical Organizations**  
Please disseminate widely to all of your members.

### 1. Summary of the January 26, 2012 National Influenza Vaccine Summit Call

**Carolyn Bridges** facilitated the call in the absence of L.J Tan.

**Influenza Surveillance Update** – Scott Epperson from CDC reported that we continue to have a quiet year for influenza in the United States. All indicators in the surveillance system are at or below baseline. Laboratory testing continues to yield a small number of positives, but regional variations are starting to appear. Seasonal H3N2 remains the most commonly identified strain in the United States, but more 2009 H1N1 is beginning to be reported in the South Central (Region 6) and Southwest (Region 9) areas. Testing also indicates that the majority of type A specimens tested are a close match to the strains in this year's vaccine, and approximately one-half of the specimens found to be type B are closely related to the vaccine. CDC will continue to provide updates on the CDC influenza [website](#).

**Antiviral Guidance** – Tim Uyeki from CDC's Influenza Division reviewed "Neuraminidase inhibitors for preventing and treating influenza in healthy adults and children," a [report](#) recently released from The Cochrane Library. The report raises questions about the efficacy of neuraminidase inhibitors and the studies that have been used as a basis for recommending the drug to treat influenza.

Dr. Uyeki noted that ACIP and CDC have no plans to change the current antiviral treatment guidelines as published in a January 2011 [MMWR](#) and posted on CDC's influenza [website](#). These publications highlight ACIP recommendations for *early* antiviral treatment of suspected or confirmed influenza among persons with severe influenza, the traditional groups designated as being at higher risk for influenza complications (e.g., the elderly, pregnant women, persons with chronic cardiopulmonary disease, metabolic disease, morbidly obese persons, etc.), and outpatients with severe chronic or progressing illness. In addition, treatment may be considered for otherwise healthy persons not at high risk for complications who present with uncomplicated influenza within the first 48 hours of illness. A detailed listing of recommended groups is available [here](#).

Dr. Uyeki suggested that this topic may be the focus of an upcoming CDC ["Have you heard?"](#) presentation. If this occurs, the Summit will provide a link and additional information.

**Announcements** - Carolyn reminded participants to submit any agenda items which would be of interest for next week's call. In addition, she mentioned that, as requested on previous calls, CDC recently distributed reminders highlighting that it is not too late to be vaccinated against influenza.

2. **The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** for week 3, 2012 (ending January 21, 2012) is available [here](#). This site includes maps of the ILINet Activity Level and the [geographic spread](#) of influenza as reported by state and territorial epidemiologists. CDC's seasonal [influenza talking points](#) from January 27 are available. Archives of previous *FluViews* may be found [here](#).

3. **CDC Influenza Resources are Available for Order!**

FREE influenza [resources](#) are available for order from CDC. Consider ordering materials early for the 2012–13 influenza season to avoid potential shipping delays.

[Contact](#) CDC's National Influenza Vaccination Campaign to ask questions or to discuss potential partnerships in areas such as efforts to reach disparate populations.

4. **Faces of Influenza Educational Materials Available**

It's important to continue reinforcing with the public there is still plenty of time to get immunized if they haven't already done so!

As a reminder, the American Lung Association's *Faces of Influenza* campaign has educational materials available to help spread this important public health message in your area. Through distribution of these materials (at upcoming events, meetings, activities, etc.), your organization will be helping to stress the importance of vaccination for everyone 6 months of age and older.

The following educational materials are available in both English and Spanish and may be previewed and downloaded via the program [website](#). Printed copies of materials can be requested on a first come, first serve basis until current supplies are exhausted, by contacting [ajoe@cooneywaters.com](mailto:ajoe@cooneywaters.com) with your name, shipping address, quantities of requested materials and desired language (English and/or Spanish).

*Faces of Influenza* materials available in both English and Spanish include:

- Brochures
- Myths & Facts About Influenza (fact sheet)
- Vaccination Recommendations (fact sheet)
- 11x17 posters

The *Faces of Influenza* campaign is a collaboration between the American Lung Association and sanofi pasteur.

5. **More on influenza research debate; Others say influenza transmission work must continue.**

Breaking silence, the author of one of two controversial studies dealing with mutant H5N1 viruses said today that the virus his team created went airborne to spread among ferrets, but it didn't kill them. Yoshihiro Kawaoka's study is one of two that sparked a Dec 20 recommendation by the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) that journals publish only the general findings, minus details that could enable others to replicate the studies. In a commentary in [Nature](#), Kawaoka explains that research on transmissible avian flu viruses needs to continue if pandemics are to be prevented. An opposing [viewpoint](#) and a related article in the [Economist](#) are available.

## **6. Host genes targets for anti-viral drugs and vaccines identified**

Influenza virus can rapidly evolve from one form to another, complicating the effectiveness of vaccines and anti-viral drugs used for treatment. University of Georgia researchers have identified several novel host genes and associated cell pathways that can be targeted with existing drugs to silence virus replication. The researchers studied RNA interference to determine the host genes influenza uses for virus replication. The full [story](#) and the research article [abstract](#) may be consulted for additional information.

## **7. Editorial from the *Denver Post*: Is state flu shot mandate even necessary?**

A recent *Denver Post* [editorial](#) questions whether influenza is a problem that necessitates increased state government regulation.

## **8. Study suggests older adults may have little defense against swine H3N2 viruses**

Canadian researchers have reported a [study](#) in which both young children and middle-aged adults had little evidence of immune protection against swine-origin influenza H3N2 viruses like those that have been reported recently in a dozen US children. The full research article is available [here](#).

## **9. *FluFighter* application!**

A new iPhone application called [US Flu Fighter](#) is now available. The application, which was designed in the United Kingdom, provides up-to-the-minute information on the level of influenza activity across the United States. (Note: This announcement does not constitute an endorsement from NIVS.)

## **10. How Generation X deals with Influenza**

A quarterly research [report](#) from the Longitudinal Study of American Youth, *The Generation X Report*, shows one in five adults in their late 30s received an influenza shot during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. The author believes that health officials can deal more effectively with the next epidemic that might occur if they understand Generation X's reactions to the first threat they had. The participants that felt that they were "well informed" scored only "moderately well" on an Index of Influenza Knowledge, five items that test the individual's level of knowledge about viral infections in general and the swine flu epidemic in particular.

## **11. Summit Influenza Pocket Information Guide still available!**

Every year the Summit collaborates with the Immunization Action Coalition to create and distribute the Influenza Pocket Information Guide. The 2011–2012 edition is still available for [order](#).

## **12. Summit Web site Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!**

Remember to visit the Summit [website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources, as well as archived copies of the weekly newsletters!

## **13. Supplemental Influenza Key Points released**

Following CDC's release of the weekly Key Influenza Talking Points (see #2), the agency issued [supplemental talking points](#) related to current influenza activity in Mexico.