



## ***Influenza Activity Spotlight***

**2012–2013 Season**

**Issue #18 — March 20, 2013**

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**Reminder:** Summit calls are scheduled weekly every Thursday at 3 p.m. ET, unless cancelled. The next Summit call, scheduled for March 21, will include a presentation on influenza vaccine safety. **Please email [L.J Tan](#) or [LaDora Woods](#) if you have any updates on activities to provide to the Summit.**

**SAVE THE DATE!** National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) will be held December 8–14, 2013. This announcement is being made earlier, rather than at the Summit meeting, so that partners have more time to plan their events.

**SAVE THE DATE!** The National Influenza Vaccine Summit (NIVS) will be meeting in conjunction with the National Adult Immunization Summit on May 14–16, 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia. Registration for the event and for the rooming block will be closing on April 30. For details and information on how to register for the meeting, contact [LaDora Woods](#) or [L.J Tan](#). More details and a draft agenda will be provided as soon as available.

**NOTICE – 2013 Immunization Excellence Awards!** The National Influenza Vaccine Summit is accepting [nominations](#) for its *2013 Immunization Excellence Awards* through **March 25, 2013**. The 2013 awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions towards improved adult, and/or childhood influenza vaccination rates within their communities during the 2012–2013 influenza season. This year NIVS added an award recognizing immunization activities focused on the adult population, beyond influenza.

A national winner and honorable mention recipient will be selected for each award category. The winners will be presented with their awards and invited to present their programs at the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit to be held May 14–16, in Atlanta. The five categories of recognition are:

- **Overall Season Activities**
- **Healthcare Personnel Campaign**
- **Immunization Coalitions/Public Health/Community Campaign**
- **Corporate Campaign**
- **Overall Adult Immunization Activities - Beyond Flu**

1. **Note:** The NIVS call scheduled for March 14 was cancelled, so the regular summary report is not included here.
2. **The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** for week 10, 2013 (ending March 14, 2013) is available [here](#). Of 5,747 specimens tested and reported by U.S. World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) collaborating laboratories in week 10, 821 (14.3%) were positive for influenza. The proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was 2.6%; still above the national baseline of 2.2%. Six of 10 regions reported ILI at or above region-specific baseline levels. Five (5) states and New York

City experienced moderate activity, 12 states experienced low activity, and 33 states and the District of Columbia experienced minimal activity. This site also includes maps of ILINet State Activity Levels and the [geographic spread](#) of influenza illness as reported by state and territorial epidemiologists. This map indicates geographic spread of influenza viruses but does not measure the intensity of influenza activity. CDC's Seasonal Influenza [Key Points](#) for March 15, 2013 have been released. Archives of previous *FluViews* are may be found [here](#).

### 3. Information from CDC

On March 15 CDC updated its [website](#) on vaccine effectiveness.

Data from a new study released online in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases* shows that influenza vaccination during the 2011–2012 season offered significant protection against hospitalization for older adults. A CDC Flu Spotlight, “Study Shows Flu Vaccination Prevents Hospitalizations in Older Adults,” is available [here](#).

### 4. Update from the College Health Surveillance Network (CHSN)

The CHSN monitors the incidence of ILI among students seen at student health services, both as an absolute number and as a percent of total primary care visits. The CHSN includes 21 schools representing 671,000 students. Currently 15/21 schools participating in the network submit de-identified ILI data into a central database each week. Weekly data is available [here](#).

### 5. Australia, Southern Hemisphere Anticipating Upcoming Influenza Season to be Severe

Australians are being [urged](#) to get an influenza vaccination amid concerns this year's influenza season could arrive earlier and be more severe than usual. More than 700 cases of influenza have already been reported nationwide in Australia during January and February, a figure that is significantly higher than previous years.

### 6. Ellen Degeneres Apparently Stricken with Severe Influenza

Due to an apparent influenza infection, Ellen Degeneres was forced this week to [cancel](#) both a week of shows and postpone her much-anticipated trip to Australia, for which she was due to arrive today.

### 7. FDA Announces New Strains for the 2013–2014 Influenza Vaccine

After a [meeting](#) held February 27, the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommended that trivalent vaccines for the 2013–2014 season retain current vaccine strain A/California/7/2009pdm09-like (2009 H1N1) virus. The committee also recommended replacing current vaccine strain A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus with an A(H3N2) virus antigenically similar to the cell-propagated prototype virus A/Victoria/361/2011 (A/Texas/50/2012) and replacing current vaccine strain B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus with a B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus.

The committee also recommended that quadrivalent vaccines, which are expected to be available for the upcoming season, contain a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus in addition to the viruses recommended for the trivalent vaccines.

## 8. Recent Media Coverage on Influenza

### [Flu Still Making Rounds](#) (BlackburnNews.com)

There have been 69 confirmed cases of the flu locally, including 3 related deaths. That's up significantly from last year. Fewer Sarnia-Lambton residents attended flu clinics. Lambton Community Health Supervisor Erin Courtney says just over 76 hundred...

### [Two Flu Cases Confirmed at Coroner's Conference](#) (KRCG)

Health officials confirmed that two coroner's conference attendees have Influenza A. A number of people became ill last Wednesday while attending...

### [Nebraska Influenza Activity Decreases](#) (Beatrice Daily Sun)

Indicators from Nebraska's public health influenza and influenza-like illness tracking systems show a continual decrease of influenza cases. Cases decreased from the last week of February to the first week of March. Flu tracking systems include...

### [Update on Cluster of Influenza A Cases at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern...](#) (7thSpace Interactive)

Appropriate viral tests were arranged and the test result of the patient was positive for Influenza A. The patient is being treated under isolation and is in stable condition. Admission and visiting to the ward concerned have been suspended. Restricted...

### [Climate May Play Role in Spread of Flu, Study Finds](#) (Huffington Post)

For anyone who's ever suspected that flu spreads more easily in certain kinds of climates than others, you may be on to something. The National Institutes of Health's Fogarty International Center and the University of Arizona discovered that flu...

### [Breathing May Spread Influenza More Than Sneezing](#) (ReporterNews.com)

The researchers also tested some of the patients while they wore paper surgical masks, recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a way to prevent someone with the flu from spreading the virus. In the study, the masks reduced...

### [Universal Vaccine Against Influenza Possible](#) (Kheleej Times)

E. John Wherry, PhD, associate professor of Microbiology and director of the Institute for Immunology at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, and colleagues, report in PLOS Pathogens that influenza virus-specific CD8+ T cells or...

### [New Research: Swine Flu Becoming Resistant to Tamiflu](#) (Boise Weekly)

Dr. Aeron Hurt, an Australian researcher from the World Health Organization, found that approximately 2 percent of swine flu cases are resistant to Tamiflu. The resistance was detected in people who haven't even been treated with the drug, suggesting...

### [Flu Findings Spark Vaccinations Call](#) (The Canberra Times)

Drug-resistant H1N1 swine flu is becoming more common in Australia and there appears to have been an increase in the number of cases that are easily transmitted. Research findings to be presented at an infectious diseases conference in Canberra on...

### [Tamiflu Resistance in 2% of H1N1 Flu Cases Globally, Study Finds](#) (Bloomberg)

Tamiflu-resistant swine flu is turning up in about 2 percent of cases globally, researchers in Australia found, raising the risk that Roche Holding AG (ROG)'s pill may become ineffective in fighting the pandemic H1N1 virus. Drug resistance in the flu...

**[And the Cities Most in Danger of a Super-Flu Outbreak Are...](#)** (The Atlantic Cities)

In 1968, an especially virulent flu popped up in Hong Kong and quickly spread around the world; by the time it had run its course, more than 1 million people had died. Such great pandemics are bound to be repeated through history. The question is...

**[Bill Would Mandate Flu Shots for Health Care Workers](#)** (Waterbury Republican American)

The General Assembly's Public Health Committee will conduct a hearing Wednesday on a bill that would make it mandatory for health care employees who have direct contact with patients to be immunized with the flu vaccine. The hearing is scheduled to be...

**[Flu Claims Another Victim in State](#)** (Rapid City Journal)

The 35th influenza-related death in the state was reported last week, according to the South Dakota Department of Health. There were 20 new laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza for the week ending March 9, with one death. To date this flu season...

**[Worst Flu Season in Years – Past Seasons Were Very Mild, Say Public Health...](#)** (Journal Times)

Health departments in Wisconsin are required to track people who have been hospitalized with the flu for 24 hours or longer. That requirement started three years ago, after the H1N1 outbreak, Langlieb said. Prior to that health departments were only...

**[US Flu Markers Show Further Signs of Decline](#)** (CIDRAP)

Flu activity in the United States last week continued its slow retreat, with more areas of the country returning to regional baselines and fewer respiratory samples testing positive for the virus. In its weekly update, the...

**[UA: Flu Peaks Related to Humidity Extremes](#)** (KJZZ)

Flu season has long been associated with winter, but a new study suggests transmission of the disease has more to do with humidity than with temperature. The heart of the study is this: Researchers don't really know why flu is seasonal, said University...

**[Flu Down Nationwide, Lingers Mid-Atlantic](#)** (UPI.com)

Influenza is down nationwide, but it is stubbornly hanging on in the mid-Atlantic states, federal health officials said. The weekly flu report of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta said for the week...

**[CQ Given Two Weeks Notice as Killer Flu Claims 20 USA Kids](#)** (Rockhampton Morning Bulletin)

More than 20 children have already died in the United States from the H2N3 strain of the virus. Rockhampton Doctor Joan Chamberlain expects the flu to hit Sydney and the lower regions first, because of the many people coming through the airport.

**[Flu Shot Proving Ineffective](#)** (WCYB)

...it is designed to protect against, which is the worst level in about a decade. Despite the findings, health officials are standing by its recommendation that everyone over 6 months get flu shots, the elderly included, because some protection is...

**[Flu Shot Push for Pregnant Women and Elderly](#)** (ABC Online)

"We're a little bit fortunate this year in that we know there's been a very bad flu season in the northern hemisphere, but it looks like our vaccine will cover that H3N2 virus, which has been causing significant problems in the northern hemisphere this..."

**[Flu Vaccine Does Protect, But May Need a Power-Boost in Seniors](#)** (American Council on Science and Health)

Here's another reason older adults should make sure to get vaccinated against the flu next flu season. Although the effectiveness of the flu vaccine varies, and is certainly lower in older recipients, receiving the vaccine may reduce the risk of...

**Swine Flu Virus Now Resistant to Tamiflu** (NEWS.com.au)

The swine flu virus that hit more than 37,000 Australians and killed 186 people in 2009 is now resistant to key flu medicine Tamiflu, raising fears a new outbreak may be difficult to fight. Just weeks before the flu seasons starts, new Australian...

**UCLA Researchers Predict Hotspots for Future Outbreaks of Influenza Virus** (News-Medical.net)

"Using surveillance of influenza cases in humans and birds, we've come up with a technique to predict sites where these viruses could mix and generate a future pandemic," said lead author Trevon Fuller, a UCLA postdoctoral research fellow at the...

**2-Pronged Approach Could Lead to Universal Shot Against Flu** (Newstrack India)

Researchers have suggested a novel strategy that could potentially form a primary component of a universal influenza vaccine capable of providing long-lasting protection. Current vaccines against the influenza virus elicit...

**Study: Novel Strategy Could Lead to Universal Influenza Vaccine that can...** (News-Medical.net)

Seasonal epidemics of influenza result in nearly 36,000 deaths annually in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Current vaccines against the influenza virus elicit an antibody response specific for proteins on the outside of...

**Universal Vaccine Against Influenza Possible** (Newstrack India)

Scientists have shown that a combination of immune cells and antibodies could pave the way for a universal vaccine against influenza, says a study. Seasonal epidemics of influenza result in nearly 36,000 deaths annually in...

**9. Don't Forget to Update and Submit to the New Adult Vaccine Locator!**

The new Adult Vaccine Finder is now available! Please forward the following information to immunization providers with whom you work!

**Attention Immunization Providers:** If interested in letting the public know about vaccines offered at your practice or clinic, go to <http://vaccine.healthmap.org>. This site already includes more than 54,000 locations that provide flu shots and has provided this information to 500,000 users from the general public. On January 28, 2013, the site expanded to include 10 additional adult vaccines. If you want to register your location on this website, click on the "about" button on the top right hand side and follow the prompts to register, or go to <https://flushot.healthmap.org/admin/signup>.

**10. 2012—2013 Influenza Vaccine Information Statements Are Now Available**

The [influenza vaccine information statements](#) have recently been updated. Both the TIV and LAIV VISs, as well as the TIV Large Print edition, have been updated, and RTF files also are available. All are dated 7/2/2012. These editions have been converted to the updated VIS format, but the text in both VISs is identical to that in last year's influenza VISs. Note that there will be minor updates in the ACIP influenza recommendations, but these do not affect the VIS language.

**11. Summit Website Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!**

Remember to visit the Summit [website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources and to view archived copies of the weekly updates.