



State of New Jersey

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***NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service Weekly  
Statewide Influenza Activity Summary***

**Week Ending December 9, 2005**

**Influenza level of activity: "NO ACTIVITY"**

Influenza testing performed in New Jersey by:

- ◆ The Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (PHEL)\*
- ◆ The WHO and NREVSS (National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System)\* Laboratories from September 20, 2005 to present:
  - Number of influenza A culture confirmed cases: None
  - Number of influenza B culture confirmed cases: One

This is the eleventh week of the 2005-06 influenza season in New Jersey. The NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service has not been notified of any influenza outbreak or increased activity in any health care facilities, nursing homes or schools throughout the state. Eight weeks ago, one of the two laboratories mentioned above reported the first culture positive influenza case of the season.

Rates of influenza-like illness (ILI) from nursing homes and emergency department visits are 0.84% and 4.50% respectively. The rate for school absenteeism showed a sharp increase (7.35%) because some schools in the southern part of the state were closed due to snow and winter schools activities.

Hospital laboratory surveillance for respiratory syncytial virus (often clinically indistinguishable from influenza virus infection), showed an increase in the number of tests performed and the number of positives from last week. We expect a steady increase in both numbers as we progress into the season

A few of the county percentage parameters showed figures well above the total average (see 06Dec.05pdf Table) but should not be interpreted as an increased level of activity since the denominator of reporting entities is very small.

From the analysis of all data collected this week from the ILI surveillance system, the level of influenza activity in the state of New Jersey remains at a level of "NO ACTIVITY". This level of activity is comparable with the same period last season.

The DHSS website listing the local health department and other flu clinics is now operational and is available at <http://www.nj.gov/health/flu/>. The public can get information on where flu shots are being given from the website.

Influenza virus infection itself is not a clinical or laboratory reportable disease in New Jersey according to N.J.A.C. 8:57-1. Accordingly, activity levels must be extrapolated from weekly monitoring activities of healthcare facilities and providers dispersed around the state.

The ministry of health in China has confirmed another case of human infection with the H5N1 Avian influenza virus in a 10-year-old girl from the southern province of Guangxi. This is the fourth human case reported in China, two of which were fatal. To date, the cumulative number of confirmed human cases of Avian influenza A/(H5N1) reported to WHO stands at 135 including 69 deaths. WHO reports only laboratory-confirmed cases. For more information go to: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>

\*The laboratories conduct testing of pre-season isolates and the first isolates of the season. These isolates can provide information regarding circulating strains and information necessary for the vaccine formulation for the following year's flu season. Also test results from representative samples collected during peak influenza activity late in the season, and after a major influenza outbreak, may identify new variants that are just beginning to circulate in the community, helping to inform vaccine formulations for the following year.

#### **References and Resources:**

- To obtain previous ILI reports: <http://nj.gov/health/fluinfo/index.html>
- <http://www.nj.gov/health/flu/preventflu.shtml>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>
- <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/>