Influenza Update N° 340

29 April 2019, based on data up to 14 April 2019

Information in this report is categorized by influenza transmission zones, which are geographical groups of countries, areas or territories with similar influenza transmission patterns. For more information on influenza transmission zones, see: www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/EN_GIP_influenza_transmission_zones.pdf

Summary

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere influenza activity decreased overall.
  - In North America, influenza activity continued to decrease with influenza A(H3N2) the dominant virus, followed by influenza B.
  - In Europe, influenza activity decreased across the continent. Both influenza A viruses co-circulated; influenza A(H3N2) was the most frequently identified subtype.
  - In North Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.
  - In Western Asia, influenza activity appeared to decrease overall, with exception of Saudi Arabia where activity remained elevated.
  - In East Asia, influenza activity was reported in some countries, with influenza B viruses most frequently detected, followed by influenza A(H3N2). A second wave of influenza activity was reported in the Republic of Korea.

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low overall.
In the Caribbean, Central American countries, and the tropical countries of South America, influenza and RSV activity were low in general.

In West and Middle Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries. Influenza activity continued to be reported from Eastern Africa although in decreasing trend with predominantly influenza A(H3N2) followed by B detections.

In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza detections increased in southern Australia and South Africa. The influenza activity in South America remained at inter-seasonal levels.

Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections.

National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 124 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 01 April 2019 to 14 April 2019 (data as of 2019-04-26 03:51:00 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 137187 specimens during that time period. A total of 20772 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 17422 (83.9%) were typed as influenza A and 3350 (16.1%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 1917 (32.8%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 3922 (67.2%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 108 (8.3%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 1196 (91.7%) to the B-Victoria lineage.

For more detailed information, see the Influenza reports from WHO Regional Offices:

- WHO Region of the Americas (AMRO): [www.paho.org/influenzareports](http://www.paho.org/influenzareports)
- WHO European Region (EURO): [www.flunewseurope.org/](http://www.flunewseurope.org/)
- WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO): [www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/Influenza/en/](http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/Influenza/en/)

Countries in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere

In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity continued to decrease with influenza A viruses predominating.

In North America, influenza activity decreased overall with influenza A(H3N2) viruses most frequently detected, followed by few B virus detections. Influenza-like illness (ILI) activity was low overall in Canada but remained just above the seasonal threshold in the United States of America (USA). After a first influenza peak in January, a second milder wave of influenza activity was reported in Canada and the USA with mainly A(H3N2) viruses detections. In Mexico, influenza activity was low.

In Europe, influenza activity decreased across the continent, intensity of influenza activity was low or at baseline in most of the countries. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses continued to co-circulate, with more detections of A(H3N2).

In Central Asia, influenza detections were low.

In Northern Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.
▪ In Western Asia, influenza activity was low in most of the countries with exception of Saudi Arabia, where severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) activity remained elevated and influenza percent positivity continued to increase.

▪ In East Asia, influenza activity was reported in some countries. In China, percentage of ILI visits and influenza positivity rates continued to decline in South China and seemed to have peaked for the second time in North China, with influenza B (Victoria-lineage) most frequently detected. In China, Hong Kong SAR, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal levels. In the Republic of Korea, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza B most frequently detected followed by influenza A(H3N2) viruses, after a first wave of influenza activity predominated by influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus.

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in North America**

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 25/04/2019
Influenza update

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Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the Eastern Asia

Countries in the tropical zone

Tropical countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America

- In the Caribbean and Central American countries, influenza activity remained low overall. Increased detections of mainly influenza A viruses were reported in Guatemala in recent weeks.
- In the tropical countries of South America, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity were low in general.

Tropical Africa

In Western Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries, with influenza A(H3N2) virus predominating. Few countries in Middle Africa reported. Influenza A and B detections were reported from the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Eastern Africa, influenza detections continued to be reported, although with a decrease in trend. Influenza A(H3N2) was the predominant detected virus followed by influenza B. Mauritius however reported predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09.

Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity decreased overall with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus predominating.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity appeared to decrease in Thailand, with influenza B (Victoria-lineage) most frequently detected followed by influenza A viruses. Low detections of
influenza B virus (Victoria-lineage) were still reported in Lao PDR. Increased detections of all seasonal influenza subtypes were reported in Malaysia in recent weeks.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Asia


Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in South-East Asia

Countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere

- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, an increase of influenza detections was reported from Southern Australia and South Africa, rather early in comparison with previous years. Several islands in the Pacific reported also increased ILI and/or influenza activity. The influenza activity in South America remained at inter-seasonal levels.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in southern hemisphere


Sources of data
The Global Influenza Programme monitors influenza activity worldwide and publishes an update every two weeks. The updates are based on available epidemiologic and virological data sources, including FluNet (reported by the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System) FluID (epidemiological data reported by national focal points) and influenza reports from WHO Regional Offices and Member States. Completeness can vary among updates due to availability and quality of data available at the time when the update is developed.

Seasonal influenza reviews: A review of the 2017–2018 influenza season in the northern hemisphere, was published in August 2018 and can be found here: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274263/WER9334.pdf?ua=1&amp;ua=1
Epidemiological Influenza updates: http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/latest_update_GIP_surveillance
Epidemiological Influenza updates archives 2015: http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/GIP_surveillance_2015_archives
Virological surveillance updates: http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/summaryreport
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