Influenza Update N° 341

13 May 2019, based on data up to 28 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 and Europe, influenza activity was low overall.
  - In North Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.
  - In Western Asia, influenza activity decreased overall, with exception of Saudi Arabia where activity remained elevated.
  - In East Asia, although decreasing influenza activity was reported in some countries.

- 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(H1N1)pdm09 followed by A(H3N2) 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 120 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 15 April 2019 to 28 April 2019 (data as of 2019-05-10 04:05:29 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 78989 specimens during that time period. 11262 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 6777 (60.2%) were typed as influenza A and 4485 (39.8%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 1111 (32.3%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 2330 (67.7%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 89 (2.6%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 3285 (97.4%) 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 co-circulation of influenza A and B viruses.
- In North America, influenza-like illness (ILI) and influenza activity were low, overall, with detections of predominantly influenza A(H3N2) viruses.
- In Europe, influenza activity was low across the continent, with intensity ranging from low to baseline. Few influenza virus detections were reported, with influenza A(H3N2) predominating.
- 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 and influenza percent positivity remained elevated.
- In East Asia, influenza activity was reported in some countries. ILI and influenza activity continued to decline in South China; in North China, although decreasing, influenza positivity rate remained high. Influenza B (Victoria-lineage) was the most frequently detected virus. In the Republic of Korea, influenza activity appeared to decrease after a second peak reported in week 15/2019; influenza B viruses predominated, followed by influenza A(H3N2).
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the European Region of WHO

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 10/05/2019

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

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 10/05/2019
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(H1N1)pdm09 virus were reported in Cuba in recent weeks. Influenza activity decreased in Jamaica.
- In the tropical countries of South America, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity were low in general.

Tropical Africa

In Western and Middle Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries. In Eastern Africa, influenza detections continued to be reported, although with a decrease in trend. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 was the predominant detected virus followed by influenza A(H3N2). Increased ILI and SARI activity was reported in Ethiopia and Kenya, respectively.

Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low overall with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus predominating. Increased SARI and influenza activity was reported in Bangladesh in recent weeks, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B viruses co-circulating.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most of the countries. In Thailand, influenza activity appeared to increase slightly with influenza B viruses most frequently detected followed by influenza A(H1N1)pdm09. Decreased detections of all seasonal influenza subtypes were reported in Malaysia.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Asia

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 10/05/2019
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 Australia and South Africa. In Australia, increased detections of mainly influenza A(H3N2) viruses were reported in Southern Australia and ILI activity appeared to increase in Western Australia. Several islands in the Pacific reported also increased ILI and/or influenza activity. Influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels in South America, though a slight increase of respiratory illness indicators and influenza detections was reported in Chile.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in southern hemisphere

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 10/05/2019

Sources of data
The Global Influenza Programme monitors influenza activity worldwide and publishes an update every two weeks. The updates are based on available epidemiological 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&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
Virological surveillance updates archives:
http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/

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