Influenza Update N° 343

10 June 2019, based on data up to 26 May 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 zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza detections increased overall. The 2019 influenza season appeared to have started earlier than previous years in Australia, Chile, South Africa and New Zealand.
  - Influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominated in Oceania and South Africa.
  - Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominated in South America.
- In Southern Asia and South East Asia, influenza activity was low overall, with exception of Bangladesh and Cambodia, respectively.
- In the Caribbean, Central American countries, and the tropical countries of South America, influenza and RSV activity were low in general.
- In Eastern, West and Middle Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.
- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal level in most countries.
Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections.

National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 100 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 13 May 2019 to 26 May 2019 (data as of 2019-06-07 04:13:54 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 46,002 specimens during that time period. 5,285 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 3,157 (59.7%) were typed as influenza A and 2,128 (40.3%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 620 (30.5%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 1,414 (69.5%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 34 (3%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 1,104 (97%) 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
- WHO European Region (EURO): www.flunewseurope.org
- WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO): www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/Influenza/en/

Countries, areas or territories in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere

- Increased influenza detections were reported from countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere.
- In Oceania, influenza activity increased across the continent, with influenza A(H3N2) being the dominant subtype. In Australia, influenza like illness (ILI) and influenza percent positive increased and were higher compared to the same period in previous years. Influenza A(H3N2) was the most frequently detected virus, followed by influenza B. Influenza season started earlier also in New Zealand, with influenza A(H3N2) and B (Victoria-lineage) viruses detected in similar proportions. Decreased influenza detections of predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses were reported in New Caledonia.
- In South Africa, the 2019 influenza season also appeared to have started earlier than previous years.ILI and influenza detections continued to increase with influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominating.
- In South America, a sharp increase of influenza positivity and ILI was reported in Chile, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses most frequently detected. Influenza detections reports remained low in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 07/06/2019

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 07/06/2019
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Temperate South America

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 07/06/2019

Countries, areas or territories 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. Low detections of influenza A viruses were reported in Cuba. Costa Rica, however, reported an increase in the number of influenza A detections (both subtypes) and influenza percent positivity.

- In the tropical countries of South America, influenza activity was low in general among those countries reporting data for this period. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity increased in Peru.

Tropical Africa

In Western and Middle Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries. In Eastern Africa, influenza detections were also low across reporting countries with all seasonal influenza subtypes detected. A slight increase of influenza B detections was reported in Kenya and Madagascar.

Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza detections were low overall. Increased severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) activity and influenza percent positive were reported in Bangladesh, with influenza B (Victoria-lineage) being the predominant detected virus, followed by A(H1N1)pdm09.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most of the countries with exception of Cambodia where influenza detections of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B (Victoria-lineage) increased in recent weeks.

Countries, areas or territories in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal level in most countries.
- In North America, respiratory illness indicators were low overall, with few detections of influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses.
- In Europe, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal level.
- In Central Asia, no influenza detections were reported.
- In Northern Africa, influenza detections were low in Egypt.
- In Western Asia, influenza activity was low in most of the countries, except in Saudi Arabia where detections of influenza A and B viruses continued to be reported although decreased.
- In East Asia, influenza activity decreased overall, with influenza B viruses (Victoria-lineage) most frequently detected. ILI and influenza activity returned to baseline in China and the Republic of Korea. In China, Hong Kong SAR, influenza activity slightly increased, although remaining below baseline threshold.

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the northern hemisphere**

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 07/06/2019
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

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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