Influenza Update N° 344

24 June 2019, based on data up to 09 June 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 continued to increase. 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 temperate South America.
- In Southern Asia and South East Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.
- In the Caribbean, Central American countries, and the tropical countries of South America, influenza and RSV activity were low in general, with exception of Costa Rica where influenza A viruses activity was high.
- 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 85 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 27 May 2019 to 09 June 2019 (data as of 2019-06-21 03:36:44 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 54 199 specimens during that time period. 6672 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 3949 (59.2%) were typed as influenza A and 2723 (40.8%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 781 (31.2%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 1725 (68.8%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 43 (2.3%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 1828 (97.7%) 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 southern hemisphere

- Influenza activity continued to increase across countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere.

- In Oceania, influenza activity continued to increase across the continent, with influenza A(H3N2) being the dominant subtyped virus. In Australia, influenza like illness (ILI) and influenza activity increased. At national level, weekly laboratory-confirmed notifications of influenza further increased, and the percent positivity increased in some states. Influenza A(H3N2) was the most frequently detected virus, followed by influenza B. Influenza activity continued to increase also in New Zealand, with influenza A(H3N2) and B (Victoria-lineage) viruses detected in similar proportions. Influenza percent positivity was reported to be over 50%, being the highest rate for this period in recent years. Decreased influenza detections of predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses were reported in New Caledonia.

- In South Africa, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominating. Influenza percent positive among ILI cases was reported as very high based on epidemic threshold calculated on 2008-2018 data (excluding the 2009 pandemic). And the influenza positive pneumonia rates were still in the moderate range compared with previous seasons (2010-2018).

- In South America, ILI, severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) and influenza activity continued to increase in Chile and Paraguay, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses most frequently detected. Influenza detections and percent positivity also increased in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania

![Graph showing number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania from 2018 to 2019.](image)

**Data source:** FluNet ([www.who.int/flunet](http://www.who.int/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 20/06/2019

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa

![Graph showing number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa from 2018 to 2019.](image)

**Data source:** FluNet ([www.who.int/flunet](http://www.who.int/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 20/06/2019
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Temperate South America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtype</th>
<th>Number of Specimens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A(H1N1)pdm09</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(H3N2)</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Victoria lineage)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Yamagata lineage)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Lineage not determined)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A (Not subtyped)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(H1)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A(H5)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 20/06/2019

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 influenza A viruses were reported in Cuba. In Costa Rica however, ILI and influenza activity remained elevated with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) co-circulating.
- 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 remained elevated in Peru.

Tropical Africa

- In Western Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries, except in Guinea where detections of influenza A(H3N2) slightly increased. Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Togo provided updates for this reporting period.
- In Middle Africa, activity remained low across reporting countries, with influenza B (Yamagata-lineage) predominating. Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, and Democratic Republic of the Congo provided updates for this reporting period.
- In Eastern Africa, influenza detections continued to be reported with influenza B predominating, followed by A(H3N2) and A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. In Madagascar, ILI activity appeared to decrease while the number of influenza B detections slightly increased.
Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza detections remained low across reporting countries.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity decreased or was low across reporting countries, with detections of predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses.

Countries 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.

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 20/06/2019

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?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

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Contact
fluupdate@who.int