Influenza Update N° 347

05 August 2019, based on data up to 21 July 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 activity appeared to have peaked and to decrease in most countries.
  - Influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominated in Oceania and South Africa.
  - Influenza A viruses predominated in temperate South America.
- In the Caribbean, Central American, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall.
- In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, with the exception of a few countries in Eastern Africa.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries.
- In South East Asia, an increase in influenza activity was observed in a few reporting countries.
- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity 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 90 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 08 July 2019 to 21 July 2019 (data as of 2019-08-02 07:01:47 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 45082 specimens during that time period. 4322 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 2749 (63.6%) were typed as influenza A and 1573 (36.4%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 942 (42.9%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 1256 (57.1%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 71 (7.1%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 923 (92.9%) 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

- In Oceania, influenza activity appeared to decrease across the transmission zone, with influenza A(H3N2) predominant among the subtyped influenza A viruses. In Australia, at the national level, influenza-like illness (ILI) and weekly laboratory-confirmed notifications of influenza remained high. There was some geographical variability in influenza and ILI activity trends, with increases reported in some states and decreases reported in others. Influenza A(H3N2) viruses were most frequently detected, followed by influenza B viruses. Influenza and ILI activity decreased in New Zealand this period. ILI decreased to just below the seasonal baseline. Influenza positivity rates remained high, with influenza A(H3N2) and influenza B/Victoria lineage viruses detected. Indicators of severity of infection in Australia and New Zealand were low. An increase in ILI and influenza B virus detections was reported in French Polynesia. No alerts of unusual influenza activity were reported among the other countries in the transmission zone.

- In South Africa, influenza activity continued to decrease this period and influenza A(H3N2) viruses remained predominant. The rate of influenza positivity among ILI cases returned below threshold (based on 2008-2018 data, excluding the 2009 pandemic), and the impact was reported as low (based on influenza-associated hospitalizations).

- In temperate South America, influenza activity appeared to decrease across the transmission zone, with all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania

![Graph showing the number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania.](chart)

Data source: FluNet ([www.who.int/flunet](https://www.who.int/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 02/08/2019

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa

![Graph showing the number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa.](chart)

Data source: FluNet ([www.who.int/flunet](https://www.who.int/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 02/08/2019
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. Cuba reported increased influenza virus detections, with all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating. In French Guiana, detections of influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria-lineage viruses decreased in recent weeks. In Costa Rica, respiratory illness indicators and influenza activity continued to decrease. Respiratory syncytial virus activity was high in El Salvador.

- In the tropical countries of South America, influenza activity was low in general among those countries reporting data for this period.

**Tropical Africa**

- In Western Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries. However, increased influenza A(H3N2) virus detections were reported in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, and Nigeria. Increased ILI activity was reported in Guinea and Nigeria.

- In Middle Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, with Cameroon reporting a few detections of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses and Central African Republic reporting further decrease in ILI and SARI numbers and rates.

- In Eastern Africa, influenza detections continued to be reported with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominant, followed by A(H3N2) and influenza B viruses. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominated in Mauritius, while influenza B/Victoria-lineage viruses...
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were predominant in Madagascar. Kenya reported low numbers of influenza A(H3N2) and B virus detections. ILI and SARI activities continued to increase in Mauritius.

Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza detections remained low across reporting countries. There were no updates from Bangladesh for the current reporting period.

- In South East Asia, an increase in influenza activity was observed in reporting countries. Influenza activity remained high in Myanmar with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominating. Increased influenza activity was reported in Thailand, with influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria-lineage viruses co-circulating.

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

![Graph showing number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the South East Asia]

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 02/08/2019

Countries in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels 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 02/08/2019

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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