Influenza Update N° 352

14 October 2019, based on data up to 29 September 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 was low in most countries, and appeared to decrease in Chile after a second wave of influenza activity of predominately B viruses.

- In the Caribbean, and tropical South American countries, influenza activity was low overall. In Central American countries, influenza activity increased in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

- In tropical Africa, influenza activity was low across reporting countries except for some countries in Western Africa.

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries except in Bhutan where influenza activity continued to be reported above alert threshold.

- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries but appeared to increase in Lao PDR.

- In the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity remained at inter-seasonal levels in most countries. Influenza season appeared to have started across the countries of the Arabian Peninsula.
Worldwide, seasonal influenza A viruses continued to account for the majority of detections, though the proportion of influenza B viruses increased in recent weeks.

National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 94 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 16 September 2019 to 29 September 2019 (data as of 2019-10-11 01:51:30 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 63162 specimens during that time period. 3494 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 1946 (55.7%) were typed as influenza A and 1548 (44.3%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 447 (35.5%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 813 (64.5%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 56 (14.3%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 336 (85.7%) 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

- In Oceania, influenza activity decreased across the transmission zone. In Australia, despite some geographical variability across regions, at the national level influenza-like illness (ILI) and weekly laboratory-confirmed notifications of influenza were lower than average for this time of the year, decreased from a peak in activity in July. Despite this year’s early season, activity has not returned to inter-seasonal levels. The proportion of influenza B viruses among influenza positive samples continued to slightly increase this period. ILI and influenza activity were below their seasonal baseline thresholds in New Zealand.

- In South Africa, influenza and ILI activity remained below seasonal threshold.

- In temperate South America, influenza activity was low in most countries. In Chile, influenza activity appeared to decrease after a second wave of predominately B viruses.
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 10/10/2019

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 10/10/2019
Countries in the tropical zone

Tropical countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America

- In the Caribbean countries, influenza activity remained low overall. In Central American countries, influenza activity continued to increase in El Salvador and Nicaragua, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 predominately detected in the former and all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating in the latter. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity was high in Jamaica.
- 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, increased influenza activity was reported in some countries. Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea continued to report increased detections of predominately influenza B/Victoria lineage viruses. ILI activity continued to increase in Senegal with detections of influenza A(H3N2) viruses. Influenza activity continued to increase in Togo with increased number of SARI cases and detections of influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses. Burkina Faso reported influenza A(H3N2) detections.
- In Middle Africa, influenza detections were low across reporting countries.
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*In Eastern Africa, influenza detections appeared to decrease across reporting countries, with influenza A and B viruses co-circulating. However, the French island La Réunion did report an increase of ILI consultations and hospitalizations for influenza.*

**Tropical Asia**

- In Southern Asia, influenza detections were low across reporting countries, except for Bhutan, where influenza percent positivity remained above alert threshold though decreased. Influenza-associated ILI were most frequently reported in persons aged 15-29 years. Influenza B/Victoria lineage viruses predominated, followed by A(H3N2). Influenza activity decreased in Nepal, with detection of A(H3N2) and B/Victoria lineage viruses.

- In South East Asia, influenza activity was low in most reporting countries. Influenza activity appeared to increase in Lao PDR, with influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria-lineage co-circulating. Detections of predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses decreased in Myanmar.

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Central America and Caribbean**

![Graph showing influenza activity in Central America and Caribbean](image)

*Data source: FluNet [www.who.int/flunet](www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)*

Data generated on 10/10/2019
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, with exception of the Arabian Peninsula. In Western Asia, influenza activity started to increase across the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, with influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominating in Qatar and all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating in Kuwait and Oman.

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 10/10/2019

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 2018–2019 influenza season in the northern hemisphere, was published in August 2019 and can be found here: https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/326242/WER9432-en-fr.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/

Contact: fluupdate@who.int