Influenza Update N° 355

25 November 2019, based on data up to 10 November 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 remained at inter-seasonal levels in most countries. However, influenza activity continued to increase across the countries in Western Asia.

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

- In tropical Africa, influenza activity remained elevated in some countries of Western Africa.

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity was low across reporting countries, but continued to increase in Iran (Islamic Republic of).

- In South East Asia, influenza activity continued to be reported in Lao PDR.

- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal levels in most countries and decreased to low levels in Chile.

- Worldwide, seasonal influenza A accounted for the majority of detections, with equal proportions of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses.
▪ National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 112 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 28 October 2019 to 10 November 2019 (data as of 2019-11-22 05:24:24 UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 85 126 specimens during that time period. A total of 6187 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 4608 (74.5%) were typed as influenza A and 1579 (25.5%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 1473 (47%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 1664 (53%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 43 (6.2%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 650 (93.8%) 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 Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO): http://www.emro.who.int/health-topics/influenza/situation-update.html
▪ WHO European Region (EURO): www.flunewseurope.org/
▪ WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO): 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 remained at interseasonal levels in most countries.
▪ Respiratory illness indicators started to increase in some countries of the WHO European region, Eastern Asia and in North America, but influenza detections remain below seasonal thresholds.
▪ In Western Asia, influenza activity continued to increase overall. Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, reported increased influenza activity with detections of predominately influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and a small proportion of B viruses. In Kuwait, influenza activity continued to increase with all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating. Influenza activity remained elevated in Oman, with co-circulation of all seasonal influenza subtypes, and in Qatar with influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominantly detected. Increased SARI levels were reported in Kuwait, Oman and Qatar.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the northern hemisphere

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flu). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 21/11/2019

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Western Asia

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flu). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 21/11/2019
Countries in the tropical zone

Tropical countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America

- In the Caribbean countries, influenza activity remained low overall; however, increased detections of influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria lineage viruses were reported in Cuba. Influenza activity of predominantly influenza A(H3N2) viruses appeared to decrease in Jamaica. In Central American countries, decreased influenza activity was reported in El Salvador and Nicaragua, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B/Victoria co-circulating in the former and A(H3N2) and B viruses co-circulating in the latter.
- In the tropical countries of South America, influenza activity was low in general.

Tropical Africa

- In Western Africa, influenza activity was elevated in some reporting countries. Increased influenza virus detections with predominantly influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria lineage viruses continued to be reported in Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Guinea and influenza A(H3N2) in Niger. Increased influenza activity due to influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses was reported in Togo. An increased trend in ILI activity was reported in Guinea and Togo.
- In Middle Africa, influenza detections of all seasonal influenza subtypes were reported in Cameroon and a few detections of influenza B/Victoria lineage viruses were reported in South Sudan.
- In Eastern Africa, influenza detections were low across most reporting countries. Increased SARI activity and influenza detections of predominantly A(H1N1)pdm09 were reported in Kenya. Increased ILI activity was reported in Zambia with no detections of influenza viruses. In the French island La Réunion, ILI consultations decreased following a peak in recent weeks.

Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza detections were low across reporting countries except for Iran (Islamic Republic of) where influenza activity continued to increase with detections of predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses.
- In South East Asia, influenza activity was reported in some countries. Influenza activity remained elevated in Lao PDR, with detections of predominately influenza B/Victoria-lineage and influenza A(H3N2) viruses. Influenza virus detections of predominantly influenza A viruses continued to be reported at low level in Cambodia and Thailand.
Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Western Africa

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 21/11/2019

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in temperate Southern Asia

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 21/11/2019
Countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere

- In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity returned to inter-seasonal levels in most countries. In Chile influenza activity of predominately B viruses decreased and the number of ILI and SARI cases returned to inter-seasonal levels.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in southern hemisphere

![Graph showing number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype]

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

Data generated on 21/11/2019

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](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/326242/WER9432-en-fr.pdf)

**Epidemiological Influenza updates:**


**Epidemiological Influenza updates archives 2015:**


**Virological surveillance updates:**

[http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/summaryreport](http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/summaryreport)

**Virological surveillance updates archives:**

[http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/](http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/)

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