

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
PRELIMINARY INFLUENZA ACTIVITY REPORT
For Week 50 (week ending December 13, 2008)**



Preliminary influenza data reviewed from the week ending December 13th, suggests that only limited or “sporadic” activity was observed during the 11th week of the official 2008-2009 influenza season. These data include initial laboratory confirmed test results from various Connecticut hospitals that reveal the presence of both type A and type B flu viruses and include reports from 6 (Fairfield, Hartford, Middlesex, New Haven, New London, and Windham) of 8 Connecticut counties. The DPH laboratory has not yet confirmed the presence of an influenza virus isolate through culture and PCR testing.

Five additional indicators of flu activity are being monitored throughout these initial weeks of the 2008-2009 flu season. Data on Connecticut residents presenting with influenza-like-illness (ILI) are reported by participants of the United States Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) (formerly known as the U.S. Influenza Sentinel Provider Surveillance Network) including Connecticut physicians, clinics, health centers, and other sites.

These reporting sites also include participants in the Connecticut Influenza Super Sentinel Surveillance Pilot Project organized this year to provide additional information on outpatient ILI activity. The DPH receives reports of institutional outbreaks including clusters of flu cases in residents of long-term care facilities. Data on emergency department visits from our Hospital Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance (HEDSS) System are also analyzed. One category in particular, fever/flu, has been shown to correlate well with influenza activity. Patients with more severe illness who are admitted into Connecticut hospitals are tracked by the Connecticut Hospital Admissions Syndromic Surveillance (HASS) System. Data on one category, total statewide pneumonia admissions correlates with flu activity. Finally, selected mortality data are monitored each week including pneumonia and influenza deaths from Connecticut cities that participate in the U.S. 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System, and reports of influenza associated pediatric deaths. All 6 surveillance systems provide additional evidence that Connecticut is currently experiencing a low level of flu activity as compared with recent influenza seasons.

The CDC has posted its 11th national influenza activity map showing initial “sporadic” flu activity in 36 states (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin), the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The states of Hawaii, Texas, and Virginia are reporting a higher “local” level of activity. The most recent CDC weekly influenza activity map can be viewed at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/usmap.htm>

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact Alan Siniscalchi or Maria Andrews at the Department of Public Health, Epidemiology and Emerging Infections Program, by calling 860-509-7994.