



Influenza Season, Update for Week 44* (Week ending Saturday, 11/07/2015)

Key Points

- ✓ Influenza activity had been gradually increasing in Connecticut since the end of August, but activity has declined during the last several weeks.
- ✓ Activity is currently classified geographically as sporadic**.
- ✓ Predominant circulating influenza virus is Type A.
- ✓ It is time to obtain your flu vaccine and take other steps to prevent influenza-related illness and hospitalization: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3115&q=500340>

The Department of Public Health (DPH) uses multiple surveillance systems to monitor circulating flu viruses throughout the year. All data are considered preliminary and updated with available information each week starting in October and ending in May.

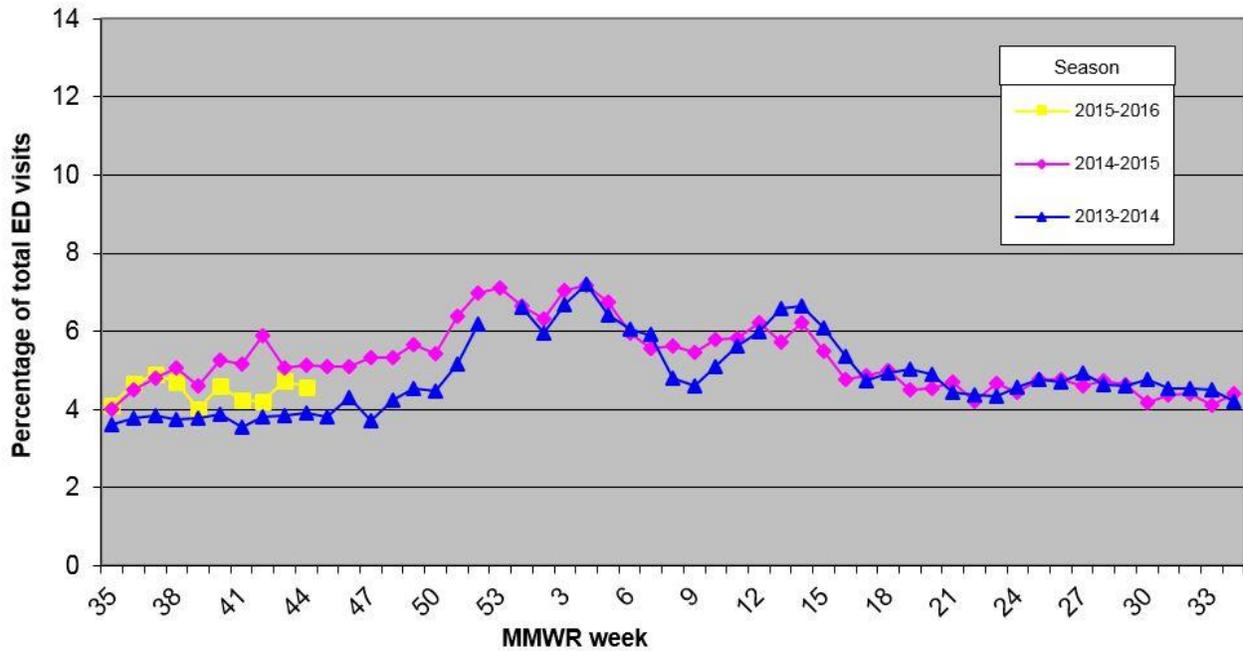
- Statewide emergency department visits attributed to the “fever/flu syndrome” have remained at a level between 4.0-4.9%, which is below the level of 5% statewide; generally considered the minimum threshold when there are elevated influenza-associated ED visits (Figure 1).
- The percentage of outpatient visits with influenza-like illness (ILI) had been gradually increasing for several weeks, but has recently decreased below a level of 1% statewide; generally considered the baseline when there are increased influenza-associated visits in the outpatient setting (Figure 2).
- The percentage of unscheduled hospital admissions due to pneumonia has been gradually increasing but remains below a level of 4% statewide; generally considered the baseline when there may be increased pneumonia hospitalizations due to influenza (Figure 3).
- A total of 24 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported. Of these 24 reports, 17 were Type A (subtype unspecified), 1 was Type A (H3N2), 1 was Type A (2009 H1N1), and 5 were influenza B virus. No influenza-associated deaths have been reported to date, this season (Figures 4 & 5).
- A total of 47 positive influenza reports have been reported for the current season. Influenza was reported in seven of eight Connecticut counties: Fairfield (18 reports), New Haven (12), Hartford (9), Middlesex (3), New London (3), Litchfield (1), and Windham (1). Of the 47 positive influenza reports: 34 were Type A (subtype unspecified), 3 were Type A (H3N2), 2 were Type A (2009 H1N1), and 8 were influenza B virus (Figures 6 & 7).

* *Week numbers refer to the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report calendar used by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for national disease surveillance.*

** *Definitions for the estimated levels of geographic spread of influenza activity available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm>*

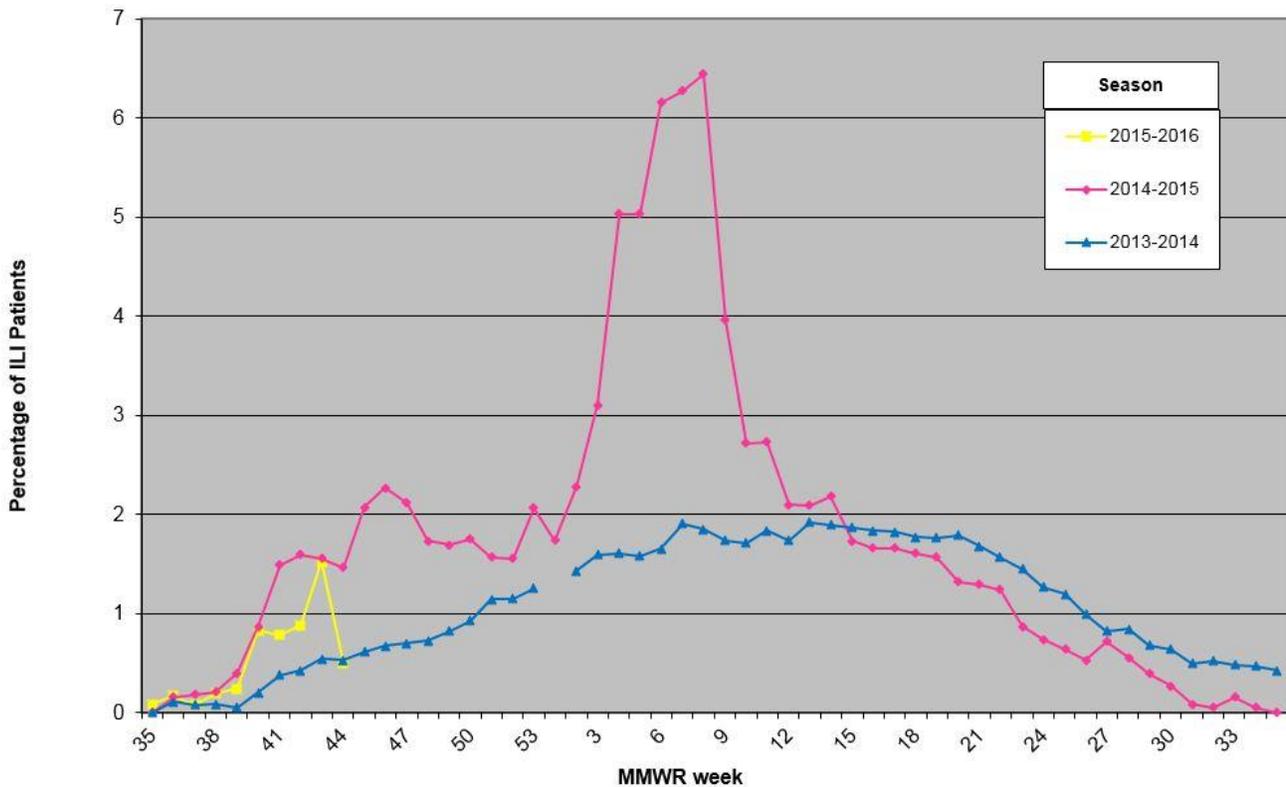
The **Hospital Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance (HEDSS) System** receives daily electronic reports on ED visits from more than half of Connecticut’s acute care hospitals. Data include a listing of total patient visits with information on their chief complaint, including fever/flu.

Figure 1. Connecticut Hospital Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance (HEDSS) System: Percentage of total ED visits for "fever/flu" syndrome category, 2015-2016 influenza season compared to past seasons, MMWR Week 44 (week ending 11/07/15)



Sentinel Provider Surveillance System: Reporting of influenza-like illness (ILI) is conducted through a statewide network of volunteer outpatient providers known as ILINet. The proportion of patients exhibiting ILI is reported to the DPH on a weekly basis. ILI is defined as a cough or sore throat in the absence of a known cause, and the presence of a fever > 100° F.

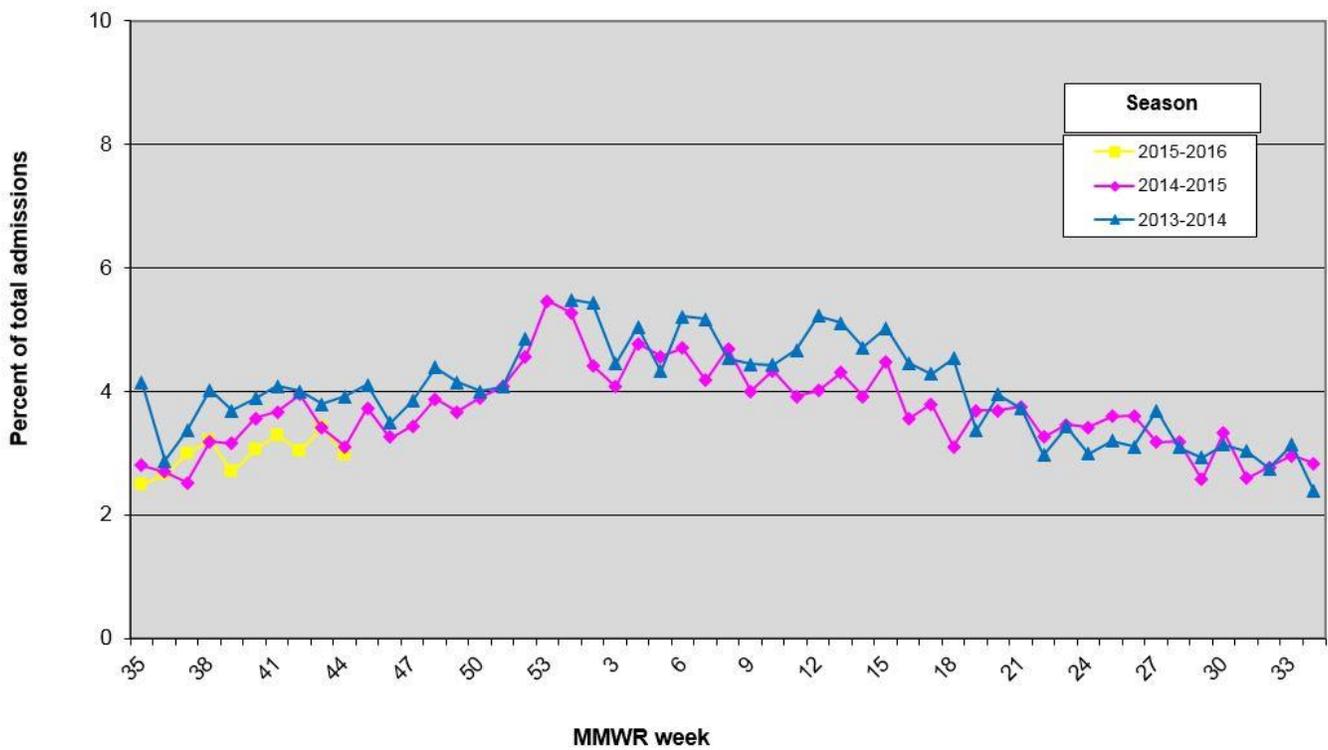
Figure 2. Outpatient Influenza-Like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet), Percentage of Patients with Influenza-Like Illness (ILI); 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16



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The **Hospital Admissions Syndromic Surveillance (HASS) System**, receives daily electronic reports from all 32 acute care hospitals in Connecticut. Information on unscheduled admissions, including those for pneumonia that may be associated with influenza infections, is submitted.

Figure 3: Connecticut Hospital Admissions Syndromic Surveillance (HASS) System, Percentage of total statewide admissions for pneumonia; 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16



Influenza-associated Hospitalizations: In Connecticut, influenza-associated hospitalizations and deaths are reportable. Data collected describe the more serious illnesses associated with influenza infections.

Figure 4. Hospitalized Patients (n = 24) with Positive Lab Tests by Subtype & Week

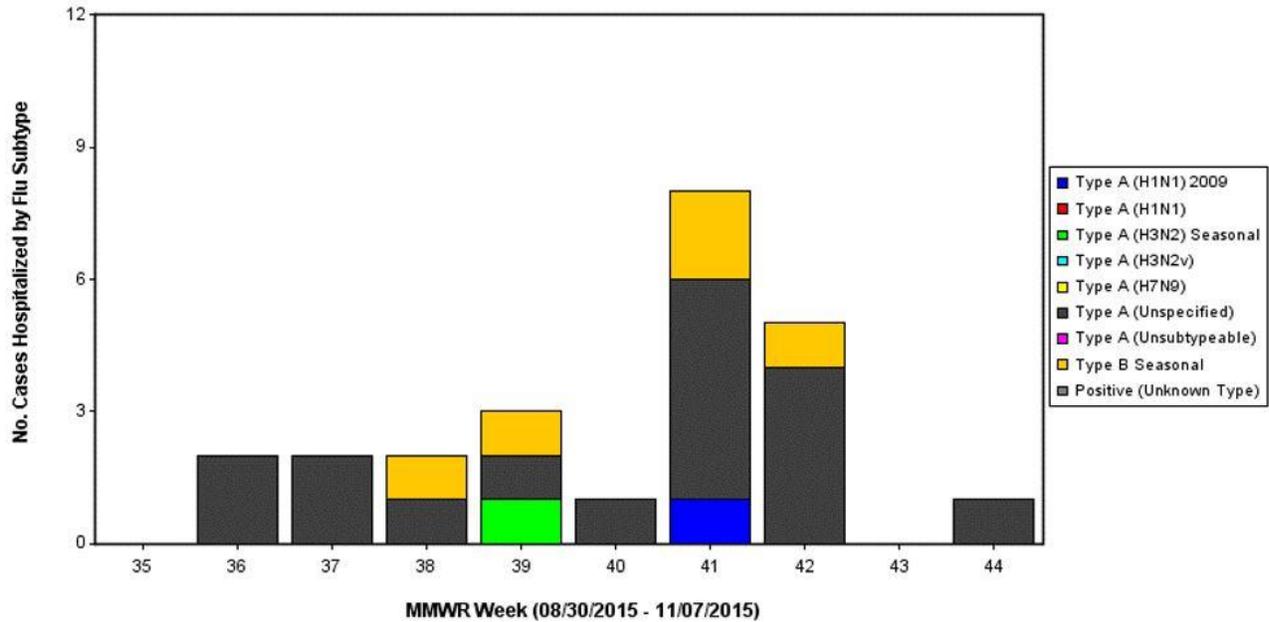
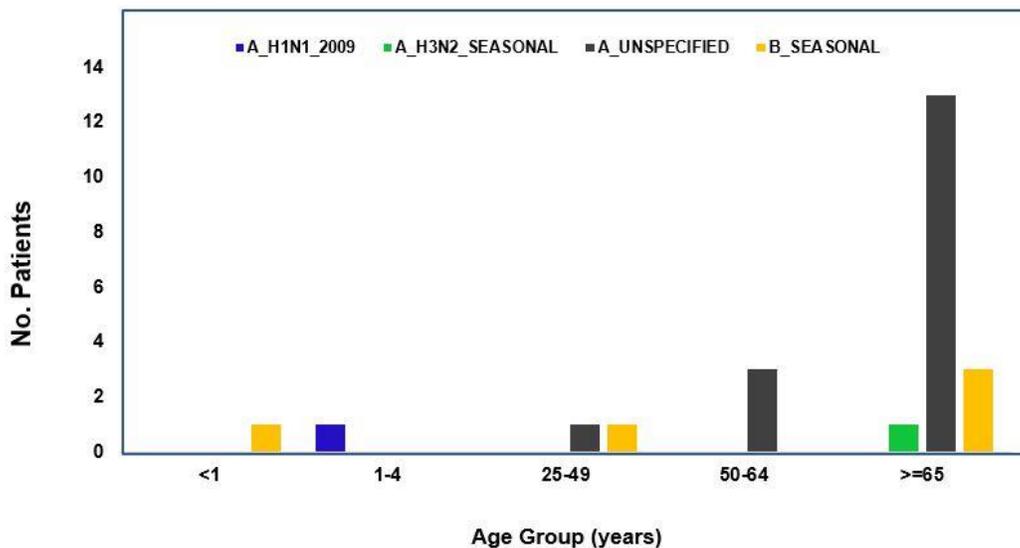


Figure 5. Hospitalized Patients (n=24) and Flu-Associated Deaths (n=0) with Positive Laboratory Tests by Influenza Subtype and Age Group, Connecticut



Laboratory Surveillance: Positive influenza tests are laboratory reportable findings in Connecticut. The DPH tracks these results to determine what types, subtypes, and strains are circulating.

Figure 6. Positive Laboratory Tests (n =47) by Influenza Subtype and Week, Connecticut

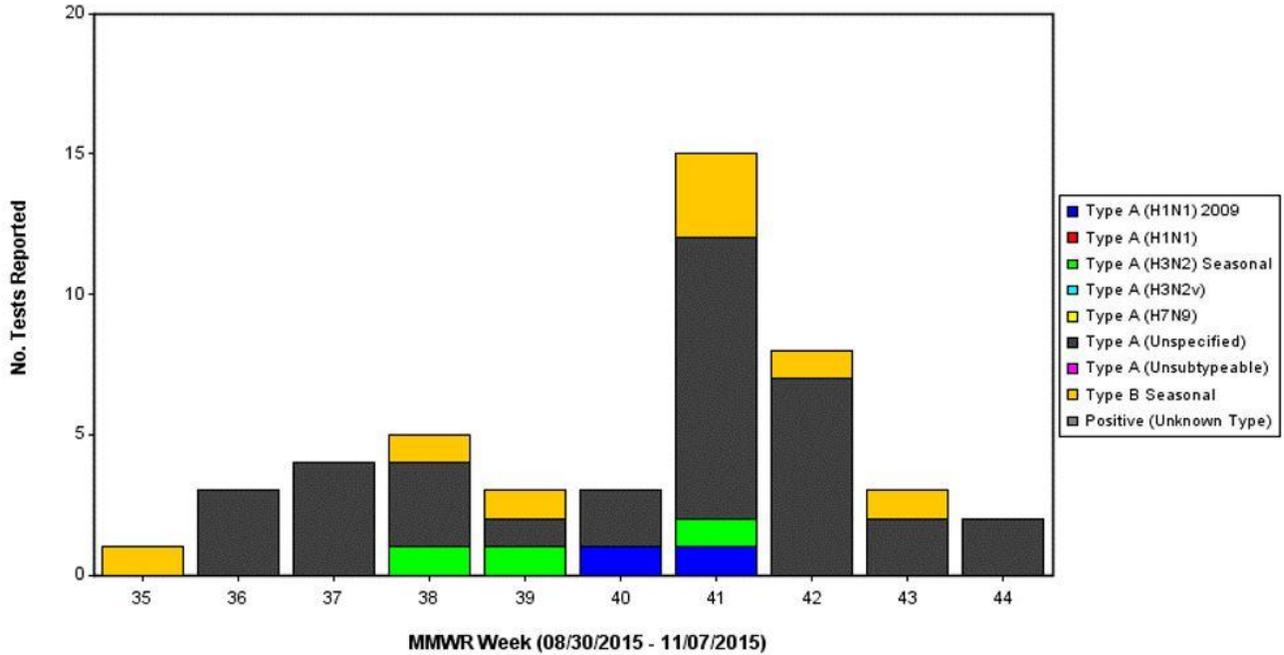


Figure 7. Proportion of Cumulative Positive Laboratory Tests (n = 47) by Influenza Subtype, Connecticut

