



Influenza Season, Update for Week 5*

(Week ending Saturday, 02/06/2016)

Key Points

- ✓ Although flu activity is low, it is rapidly increasing in Connecticut and in parts of the country; it is currently classified geographically in Connecticut as widespread**.
- ✓ The predominant influenza viruses identified this season are Type A.
- ✓ An increasing number of Type A isolates subtyped have been 2009 H1N1
- ✓ 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.

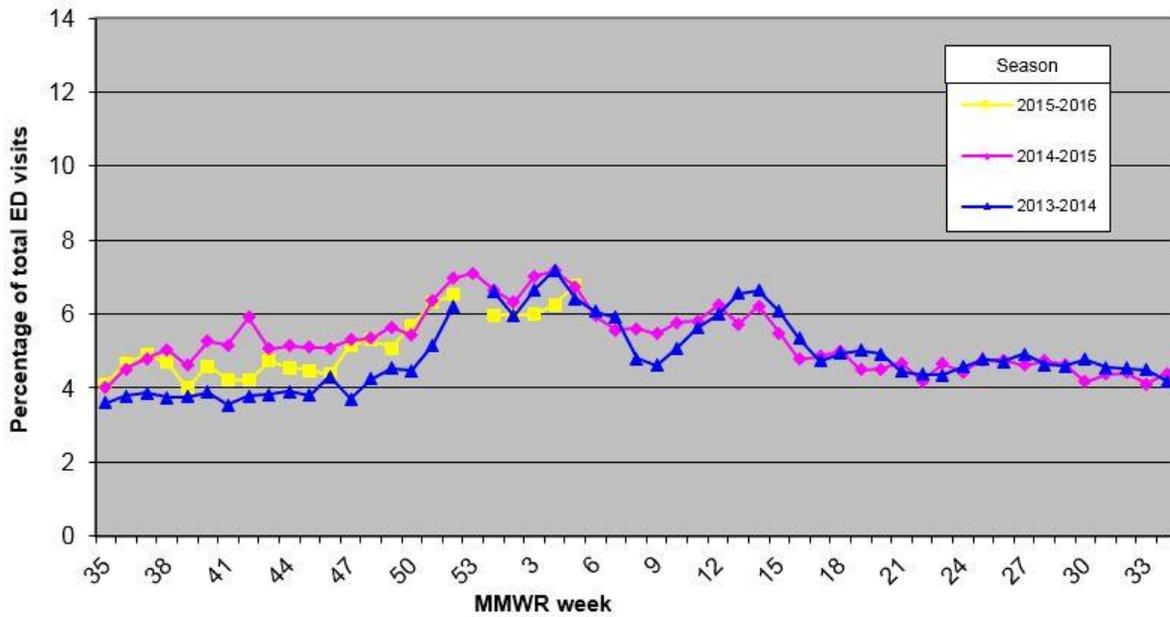
- Statewide emergency department visits attributed to the “fever/flu syndrome” have continued to exceed the level of 5% statewide; generally considered the minimum threshold when there are elevated influenza-associated ED visits (Figure 1).
- The percentage of outpatient visits with influenza-like illness (ILI) have generally exceeded the 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 have generally exceeded a level of 4% statewide; generally considered the baseline when there may be increased pneumonia hospitalizations due to influenza (Figure 3).
- A total of 184 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported. Of these reports, 157 are Type A (subtype unspecified), 11 are Type A (2009 H1N1), 1 is Type A (H3N2), and 15 are influenza B virus. One influenza-associated death in an individual greater than 65 years of age has been reported to date, this season (Figures 4 & 5).
- A total of 491 positive influenza reports have been reported for the current season. Influenza was reported in all eight Connecticut counties: Fairfield (154), New Haven (144), Hartford (120), New London (25), Litchfield (15), Tolland (14), Middlesex (10), and Windham (9). Of the 491 positive influenza reports: 359 are Type A (subtype unspecified), 57 are Type A (2009 H1N1), 7 are Type A (H3N2), and 68 are 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>

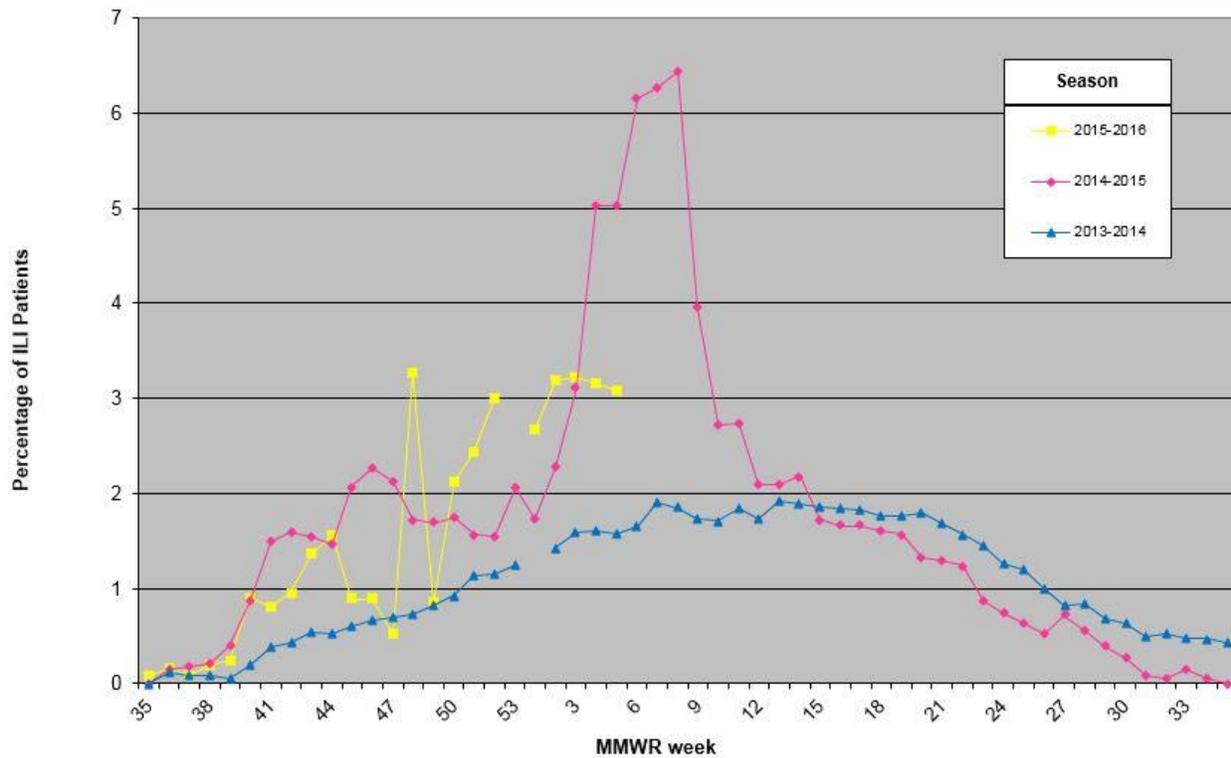
The **Hospital Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance (HEDSS) System** receives daily electronic reports on ED visits from more than half of Connecticut’s acute care hospitals. Data include a listing of total patient visits with information on their chief complaint, including fever/flu.

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 5 (week ending 02/06/16)



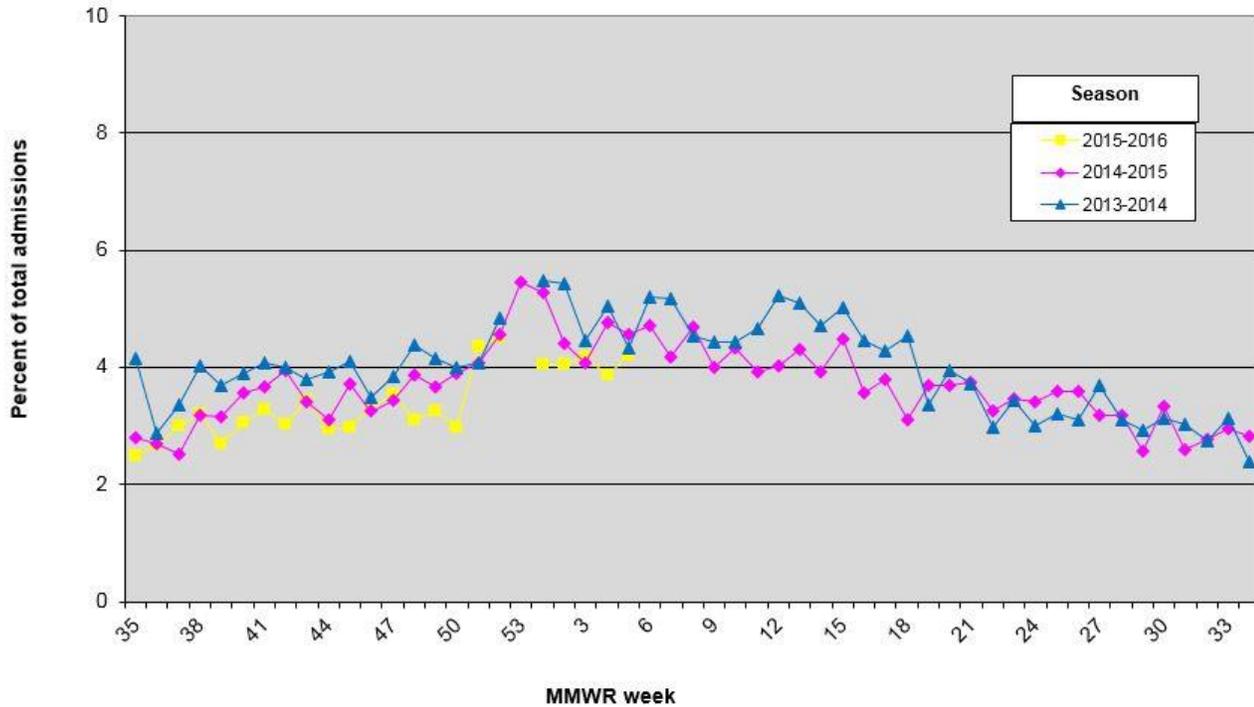
Sentinel Provider Surveillance System: Reporting of influenza-like illness (ILI) is conducted through a statewide network of volunteer outpatient providers known as ILINet. The proportion of patients exhibiting ILI is reported to the DPH on a weekly basis. ILI is defined as a cough or sore throat in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



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 = 184) with Positive Lab Tests by Subtype & Week

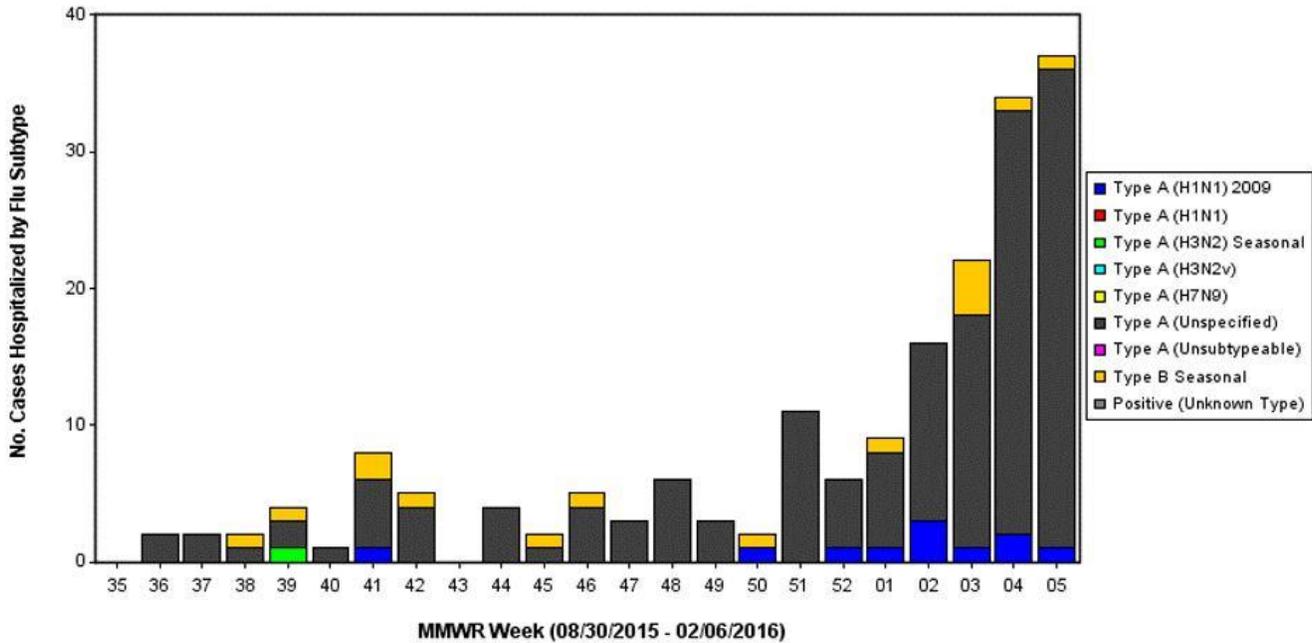
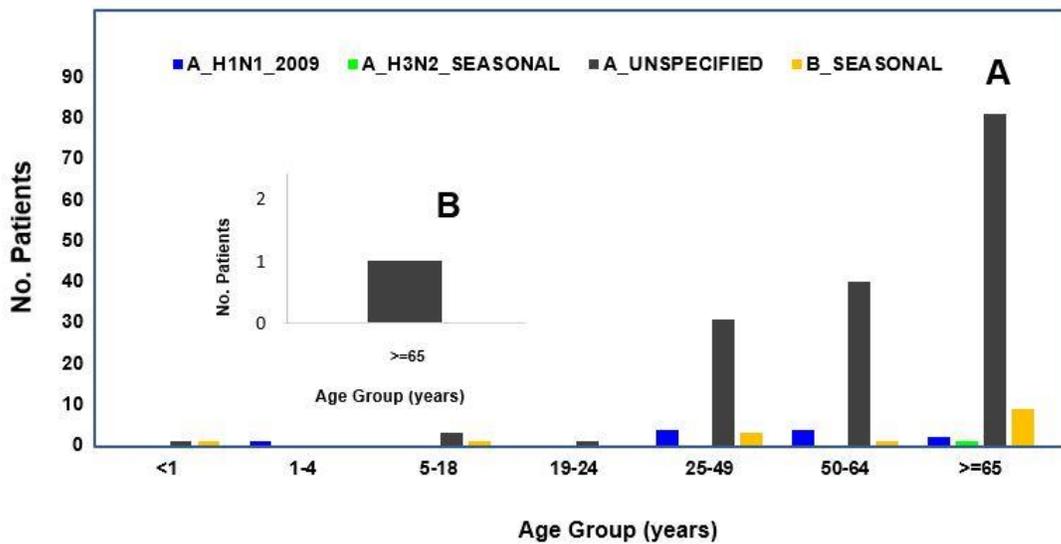


Figure 5. Hospitalized Patients (A n=184) and Flu-Associated Deaths (B, n=1) with Positive Laboratory Tests by Influenza Subtype and Age Group, Connecticut



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 = 491) by Influenza Subtype and Week, Connecticut

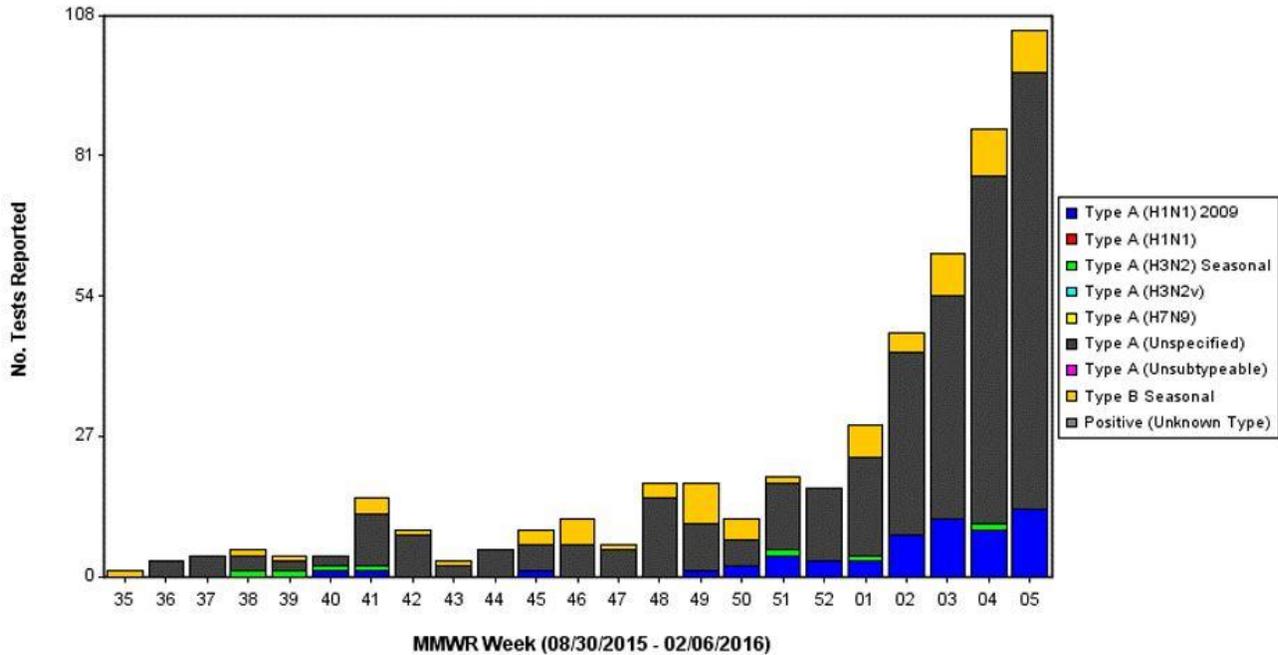


Figure 7. Proportion of Cumulative Positive Laboratory Tests (n = 491) by Influenza Subtype, Connecticut

