

Ontario Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness Study (VE) Bulletin.

Dear Sentinel,

Between December 24 and January 12 the Public Health Ontario Laboratory (PHOL) - Toronto tested samples from 88 cases submitted by VE sentinels. Among these, 2 samples tested positive for influenza B and one tested positive for influenza A which we were unable to subtype. We are seeing **increased influenza activity** in Ontario in recent weeks with most samples positive for influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B. We also observed an increase in hospitalizations subsequent to influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 infection, including one case with a fatal outcome (for more details follow the link below to the Ontario Influenza Bulletin).

Study related news and issues:

- We received many requisition forms that are **not fully completed**. Much valuable time is spent on the phone with your staff trying to complete the missing information!
- **Please fully complete the following fields on the requisition form:** (Also see sample attached)
 - ✓ **Section 1 – Submitter** – name and address should be legible. These are used for reporting the results back to you
 - ✓ **Section 2 – Patient Information:** Name, DOB, Sex and postal code are required
 - ✓ **Section 3 – Specimen Type and Site:** Specify if nasal, nasopharyngeal or other
 - ✓ **Section 4 – Date of collection** and clinical information if relevant
 - ✓ **Study questionnaire – All questions (1-8) are required in order to calculate influenza vaccine effectiveness.** Please pay close attention to the first 2 questions – regarding patient's consent and eligibility - and make efforts to assure both are accurately answered prior to submitting the sample.
- **We would like to remind you to please collect samples from patients aged 65 years and older.** The VE study is hoping to evaluate vaccine effectiveness in this age group. Currently **34/362 (9.4%)** of the samples we received are from individuals aged 65+.

Table 1: Respiratory viruses detected among VE specimens received December 24, 2011 – January 12, 2012

Detected viruses	Number of positive specimens	Public Health Unit
Influenza A (Unable to subtype; indeterminate)	1; 2	SMD; TOR
Influenza A/H3	0	
Influenza A/pH1N1	0	
Influenza B	2	MSL, PEEL
Parainfluenza	3	HAL, NIA, TOR
Coronavirus	3	DUR, OTT, TOR
Adenovirus	1	OTT
Respiratory Syncytial Virus	4	HAL, LGL, OTT, TOR
Enterovirus	0	
Rhinovirus	6	LGL, MSL, NIA, OTT, WAT
Human Metapneumovirus	0	
Total Positive	19*	(Note: *May include co-infections)
Total specimens tested by Multiplex	47	

(Public Health Unit: ALG – Algoma, BRN – Brant, DUR – Durham, EOH – Eastern Ontario, GBO – Grey-Bruce, HAL – Halton, HDN – Haldimand-Norfolk, HAM – Hamilton, HUR – Huron, KFL – Kingston-Frontenac and Lennox and Addington, LAM – Lambton, LGL – Leeds-Grenville and Lanark, MSL – Middlesex-London, NIA – Niagara Regional Area, NWR – Northwestern, OTT – City of Ottawa, OXF – Oxford, PEEL – Peel region, REN – Renfrew, SMD – Simcoe-Muskoka District, THB – Thunder Bay, TOR – Toronto, WAT – Waterloo, WDG – Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph, WEC – Windsor-Essex, YRK – Region of York)

For more information on the VE study and information on circulating respiratory viruses, please see: <http://www.oahpp.ca/resources/studies/vestudy/index.html>

Influenza activity in Ontario

Overall, during weeks 50-52 (December 11-31, 2011) influenza activity in Ontario was **slightly higher** with 32 new cases testing positive for influenza in the province (11 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 influenza A(H3) and 10 influenza B; nine samples were not subtyped, and one was reported as 'other'). Ontario health units reported **no new institutional influenza outbreaks** for this period; however 18 institutional **respiratory infection outbreaks** were reported during weeks 50-52. ILI consultation rates reported by FluWatch sentinels during week 50 were **higher** than week 49. Weeks 51 and 52 showed a **slight decrease** in rates.

For more information see: <http://www.oahpp.ca/resources/flubulletin.html>

