

FLU EXPRESS



Flu Express is a weekly report produced by the Respiratory Disease Office of the Centre for Health Protection. It monitors and summarizes the latest local and global influenza activities.

Local Situation of Influenza Activity (as of May 13, 2015)

Reporting period: May 3 – May 9, 2015 (Week 19)

- The overall influenza activity in the past week remained at a low level.
- Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Except for those with contraindications, influenza vaccination is suitable for all persons aged 6 months or above.
- Children (aged between six months and less than 6 years, or attending a kindergarten or child care centre in Hong Kong) and elderly (aged 65 years or above), who are eligible, can be subsidized for seasonal influenza vaccination from enrolled private doctors participating in the Government's vaccination subsidy schemes starting from Oct 6, 2014.

Influenza-like-illness surveillance among sentinel general outpatient clinics and sentinel private doctors, 2011-15

In week 19, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) increased to 4.1 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations from 2.9 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, left). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 43.3 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was similar to 42.2 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, right).

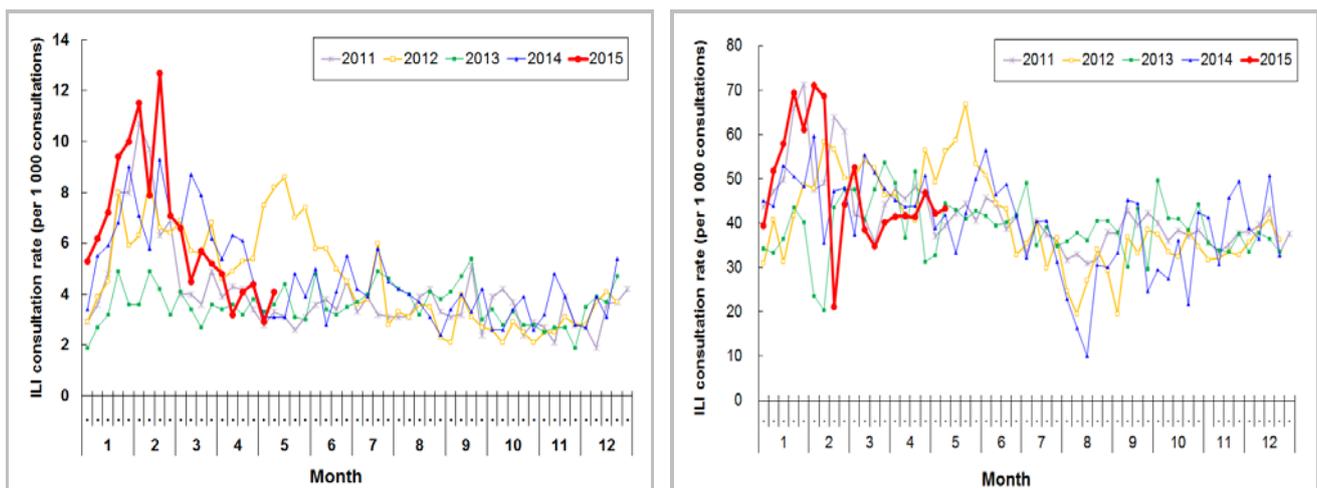


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPCs (left) and private doctors (right), 2011-15

Laboratory surveillance, 2011-15

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 19, 184 (6.23%) were tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses, including 10 (0.34%) influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 90 (3.05%) influenza A(H3), 79 (2.67%) influenza B and 5 (0.17%) influenza C. The percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses last week was 6.23%, which was lower than 7.80% recorded in the previous week (Figure 2). Among influenza virus detections, the proportion of A(H3N2) was 48.9% which was similar to 47.6% in the previous week, while that of B decreased from 45.9% to 42.9%. That of A(H1) and C remained low.

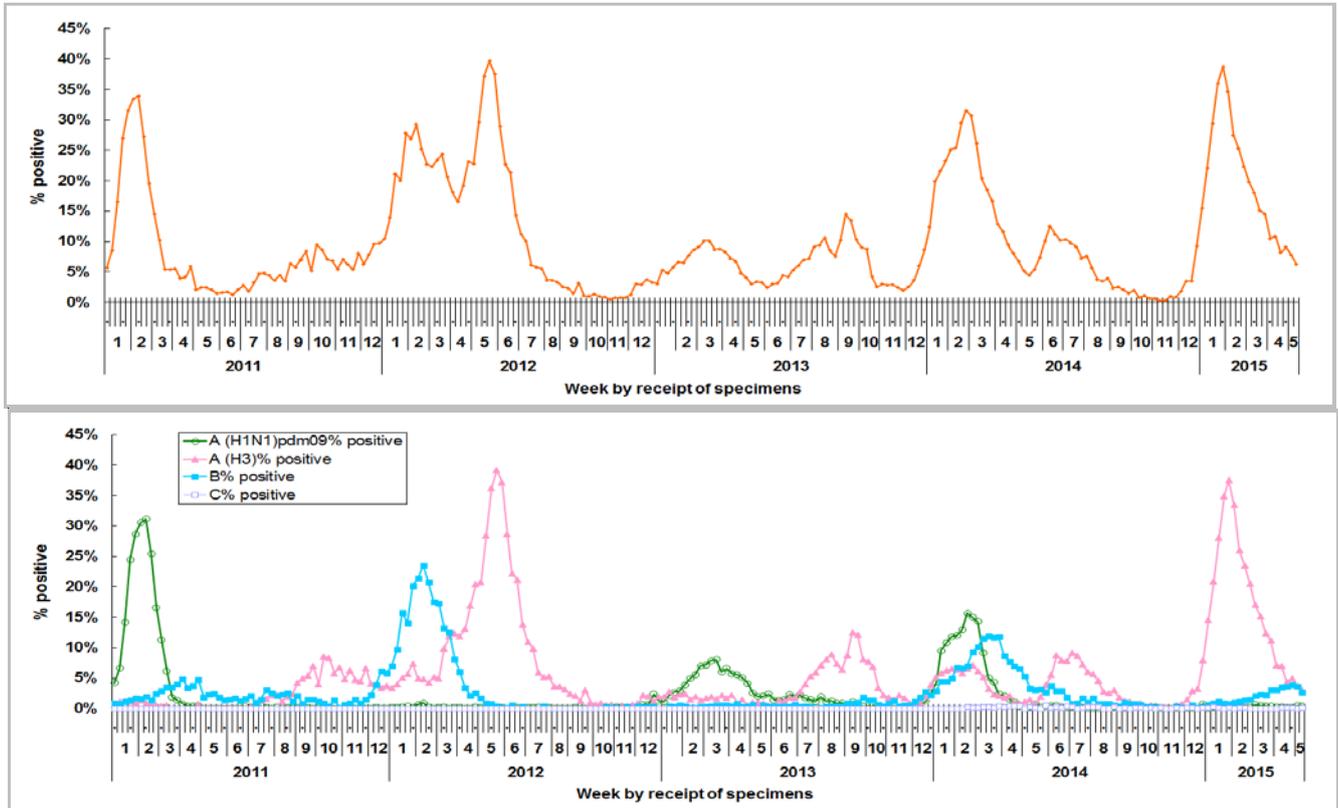


Figure 2 Percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for influenza viruses, 2011-15 (upper: overall positive percentage, lower: positive percentage by subtypes)

Influenza-like illness outbreak surveillance, 2011-15

In week 19, the number of ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/ institutions recorded was 3, which was lower than 6 recorded in the previous week (Figure 3). In the first 4 days of week 20 (May 10 to 13, 2015), 1 institutional ILI outbreak was recorded. Majority of the outbreaks in the past four weeks occurred in residential care homes for the elderly (50.0%), and schools (44.4%).

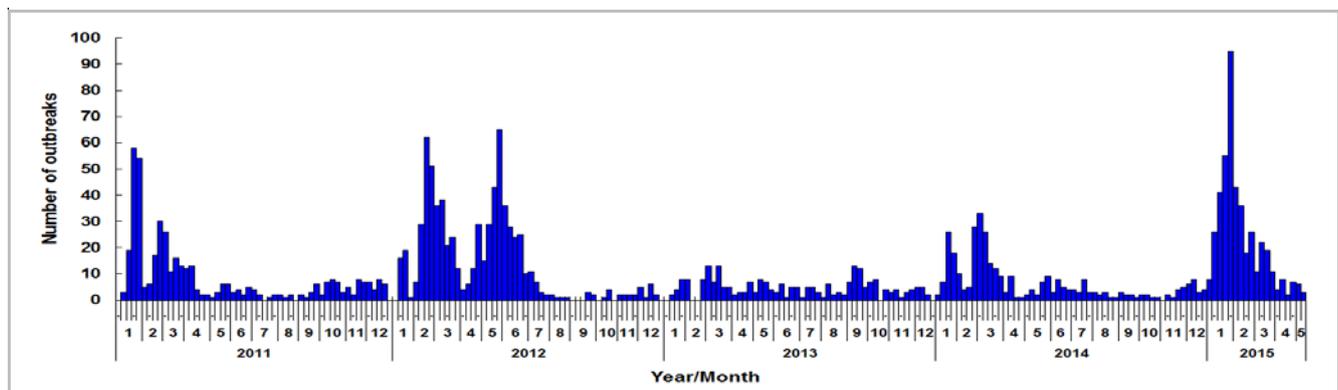


Figure 3 ILI outbreaks in schools/institutions, 2011-15

Rate of influenza-like illness syndrome group in accident and emergency departments, 2011-15[#]

In week 19, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 150.6 (per 1,000 coded cases), which was lower than the rate of 165.8 in the previous week (Figure 4).

#Note: The influenza-like illness syndrome group includes codes such as influenza, upper respiratory tract infection, fever, cough, throat pain, and pneumonia.

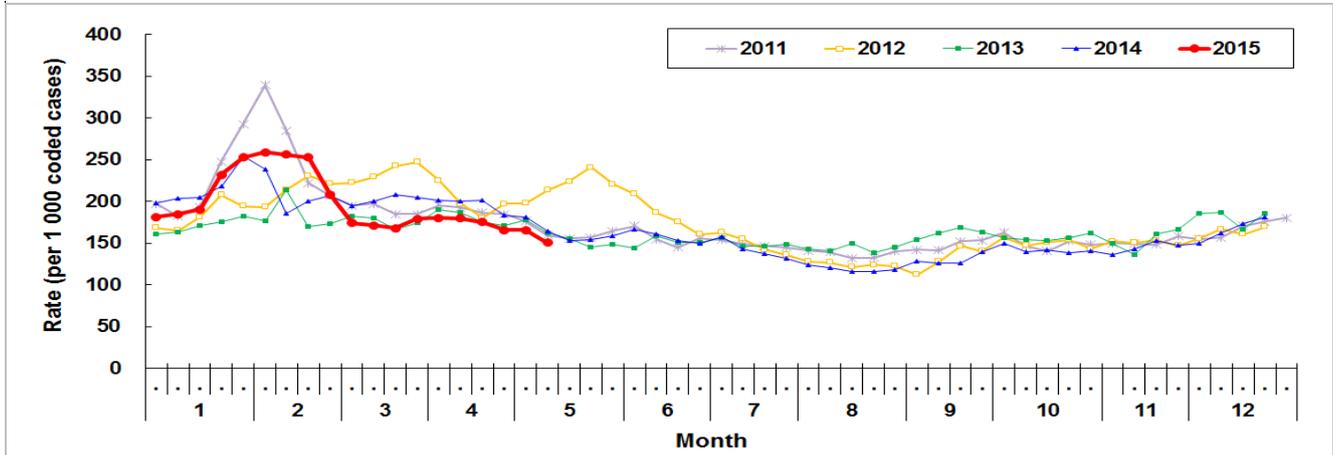


Figure 4 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2011-15

Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths in public hospitals based on discharge coding, 2011-15

In week 19, the admission rates in public hospitals with principal diagnosis of influenza for persons aged 0-4 years, 5-64 years and 65 years or above were 0.45, 0.03 and 0.25 cases (per 10,000 people in the age group) respectively, as compared to 0.49, 0.04 and 0.49 cases in the previous week (Figure 5). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza is also shown in Figure 5.

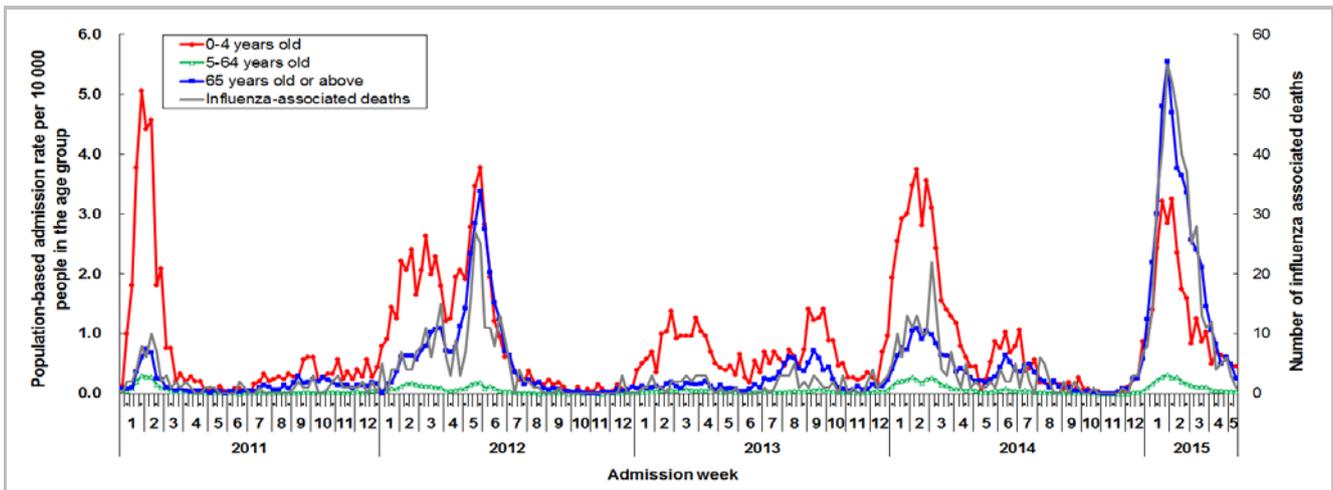


Figure 5 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2011-15

Fever surveillance at sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens, 2011-15

In week 19, 0.63% of children in the sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (38°C or above) as compared to 0.67% in the previous week (Figure 6).

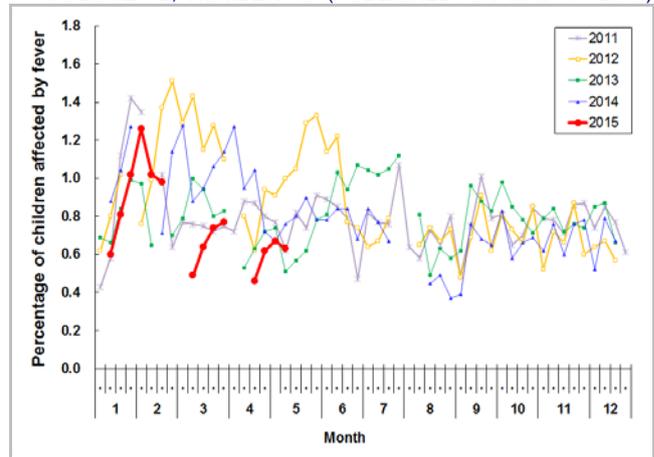


Figure 6 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2011-15

Fever surveillance at sentinel residential care homes for the elderly, 2011-15

In week 19, 0.09% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) had fever (38°C or above), as compared to 0.08% in the previous week (Figure 7).

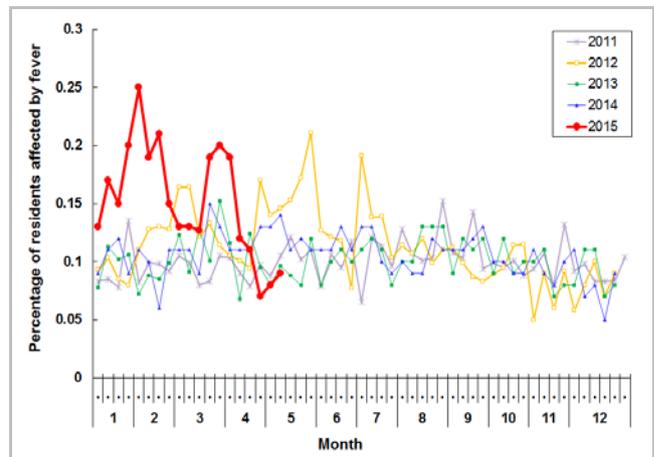


Figure 7 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2011-15

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel Chinese medicine practitioners, 2011-15

In week 19, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 3.12 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations as compared to 3.17 in the previous week (Figure 8).

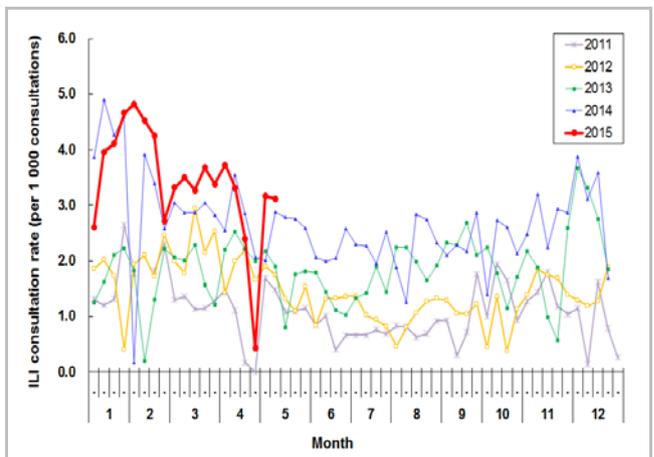


Figure 8 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2011-15

Surveillance of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death (Aged below 18 years)

- In week 19 and the first 4 days of week 20 (May 10 to 13, 2015), there were no new cases of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death.

Note: The data reported are provisional figures and subject to further revision.

Surveillance of oseltamivir resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection

- In week 19 and the first 4 days of week 20, 2015 (May 10 to 13, 2015), there were no new reports of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection. There are totally 47 reports of oseltamivir resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus detected in Hong Kong since 2009.

Global Situation of Influenza Activity

- In the United States (week ending May 2, 2015), the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness is below the national baseline. The percentage that tested positive for influenza viruses has peaked at 31.79% in the last week of 2014 and decreased to 5.5% in the week ending May 2. Influenza B viruses accounted for more than 91% of all influenza viruses reported in this reporting period.
- In Canada (week ending May 2, 2015), overall influenza activity continues to decline. The percentage positive for influenza A (0.9%) and B (9.2%) in the week ending May 2 declined from the previous week.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending May 3, 2015), influenza activity remained at baseline levels. The percentage that tested positive for influenza viruses in England reached a peak of 31.7% in the first week of 2015 and decreased to 4.0% in the week ending May 3.
- In Europe (week ending May 3, 2015), influenza activity continued to decrease. The positivity rate decreased to 14% in the week ending May 3, which is however still over the threshold of 10%. Influenza B viruses accounted for 86% of detections.
- In Taiwan (week ending May 9, 2015), the percentage tested positive for influenza viruses increased to 21.2 % in the week ending May 2 from 16.0% in the preceding one. Influenza A viruses accounted for 65.4% of all influenza viruses reported in this reporting period.

Sources:

Information have been extracted from the following sources when updates are available: [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [Public Health Agency of Canada](#), [Public Health England](#), [Joint European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention-World Health Organization/Flu News Europe](#) and [Taiwan Centers for Disease Control](#).