



Regional Update EW 50 & 51

Influenza
(January 4, 2011 - 17 h GMT; 12 h EST)

The information presented in this update is based on data provided by Ministries of Health and National Influenza Centers of Member States to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) or from updates on the Member States' Ministry of Health web pages.

- In North America (Canada and United States), at the national level, overall influenza activity increased as compared to the previous week. In Canada and Mexico, influenza A/H3 predominated this week, while in the United States, there has been a co-circulation of influenza A and B.
- Influenza activity in Central America and South America continued to remain low
- Influenza virus A/H3 and influenza B are co-circulating in the Americas Region

Epidemiologic and virologic influenza update

North America

In Canada¹, in epidemiological week (EW) 50, overall influenza activity increased as compared to the previous week, particularly in regions across the Prairies, Ontario and Quebec. This week, one region reported widespread influenza activity, 7 regions reported localized activity, 14 regions reported sporadic activity and 34 regions reported no activity. The influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rate (24.5 consultations per 1,000 patients) increased from last week, but remained within the expected levels for this time of year. Children under 5 years had the highest ILI consultation rates (69 per 1,000 consultations). The percentage of samples positive for influenza (EW 50: 15.8%) increased as compared to the previous week. Since the beginning of the influenza season, A/H3N2 has been the predominant influenza strain circulating in Canada. Among other respiratory viruses, the proportion of specimens testing positive for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) increased in EW 50 as compared to the previous week.

In Mexico, in EW 49, of all samples tested, the percentage of samples positive for influenza was ~38%. Influenza A/H3 has predominated since EW 30.

In the United States², in EW 51, at the national level, the proportion of outpatient consultations for ILI surpassed the baseline. At the regional level, two regions reported ILI activity to be above the region-specific baseline, and the remaining eight reported ILI-activity to be below the region-specific baseline. The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was at the epidemic threshold. One influenza A/H3-associated pediatric death was reported this week. During EW 51, 21% of samples tested were positive for influenza [unsubtyped influenza A (40.2%), followed by influenza type B (30.5%), and influenza A/H3 (27.1%)].

Caribbean

In Cuba, RSV continued to predominate between EWs 47-50. Among the influenza viruses, influenza A/H3 was the predominant virus circulating.

In the Dominican Republic, in EW 50, of all samples tested, the percentage of samples positive for influenza viruses was ~11%. Low but equal numbers of influenza, RSV, and adenovirus cases were detected this week.

Central America

In Costa Rica, from EW 42–51, influenza type B was the predominant influenza virus circulating. Small numbers of adenovirus and RSV continued to be detected.

In Honduras, in EW 51, very few samples tested positive for respiratory viruses.

South America – Andean

In Bolivia, the predominant influenza virus circulating was influenza A/H3, especially in the eastern part of the country.

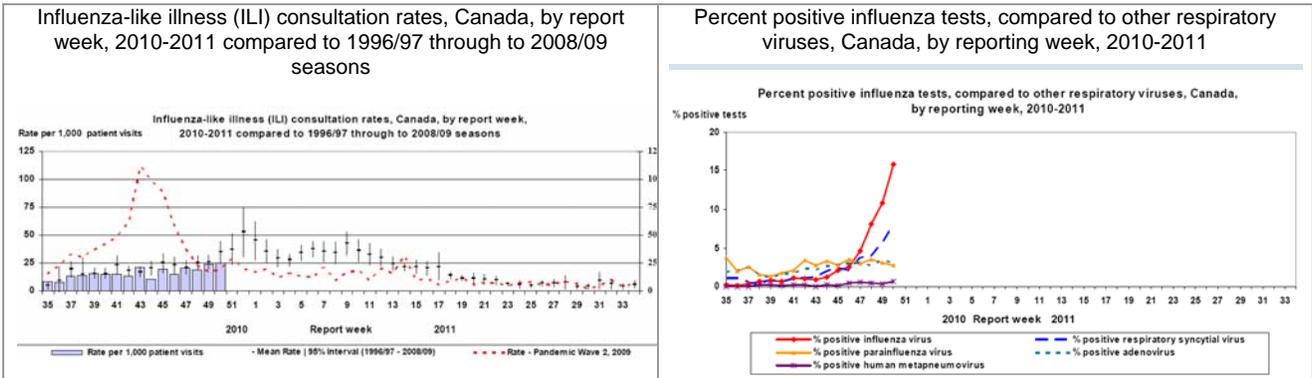
South America – Southern Cone

In Paraguay, in EW 51, the only respiratory virus detected was influenza A/H3, which has predominated since EW41. The proportion of specimens testing positive for influenza showed an increasing trend since EW 42.

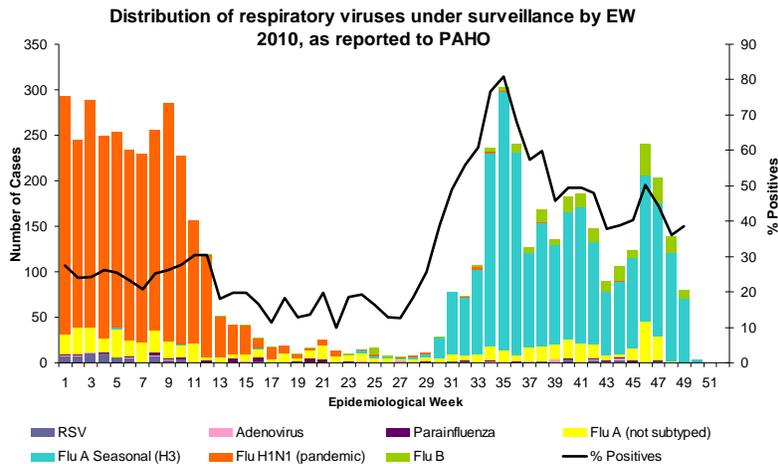
Graphs

North America

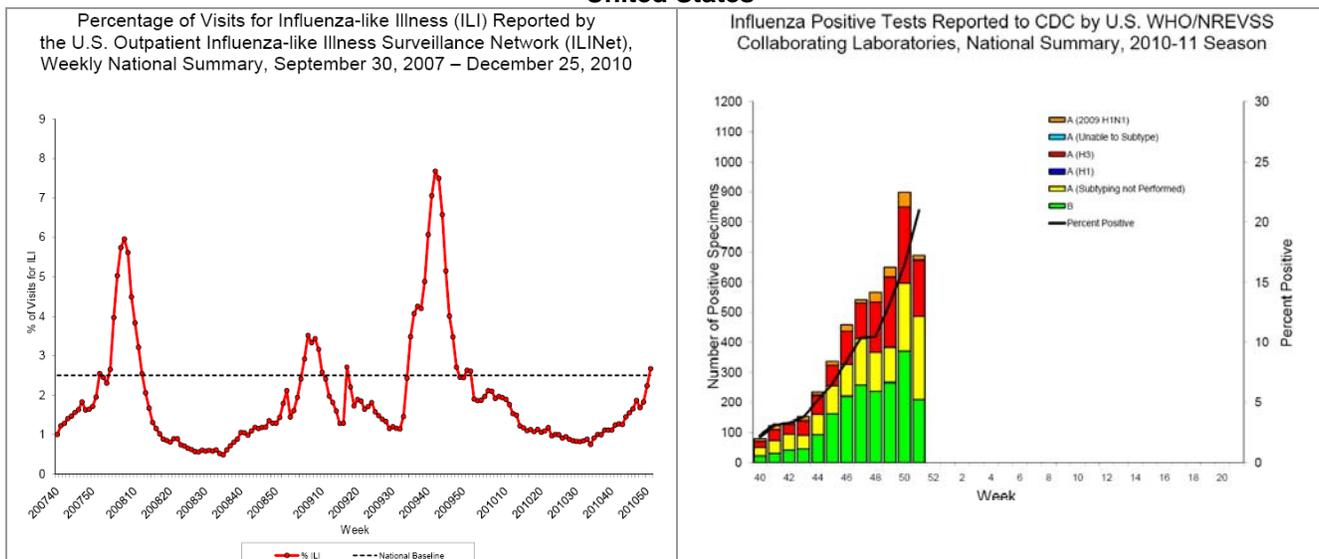
Canada



Mexico

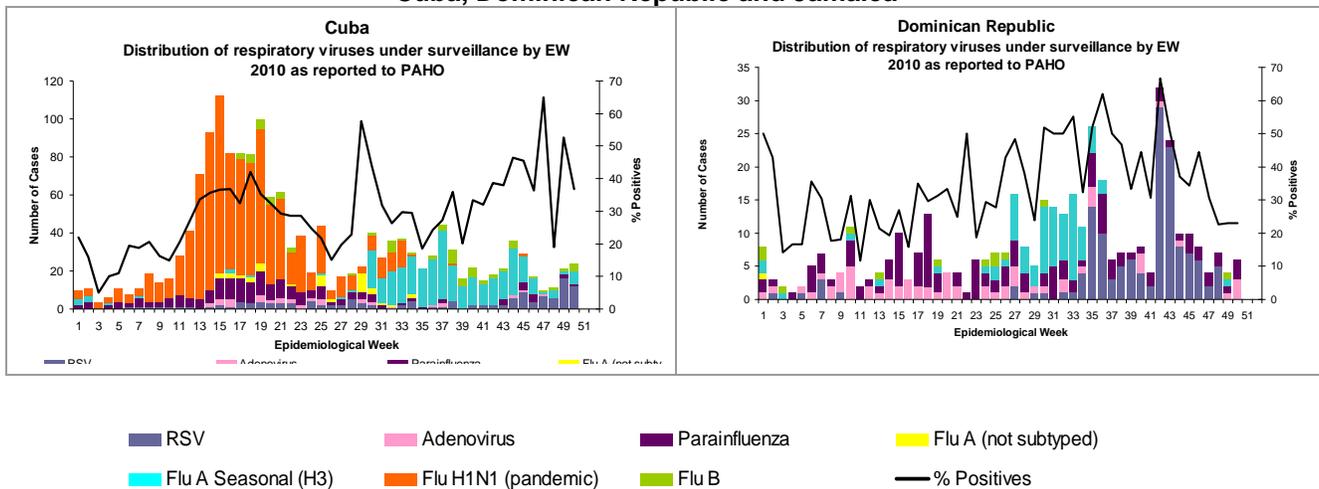


United States

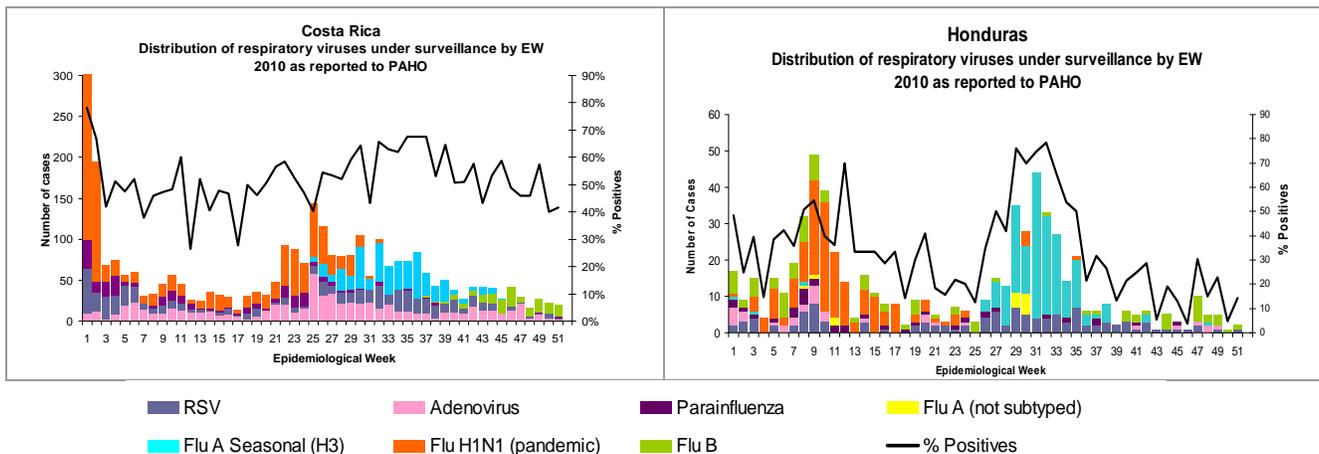


Caribbean

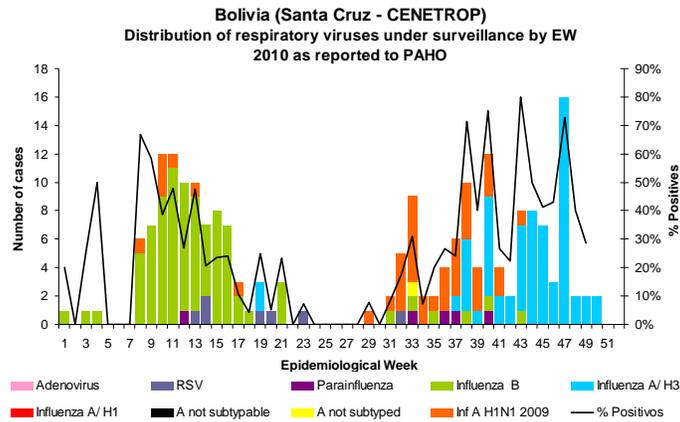
Cuba, Dominican Republic and Jamaica



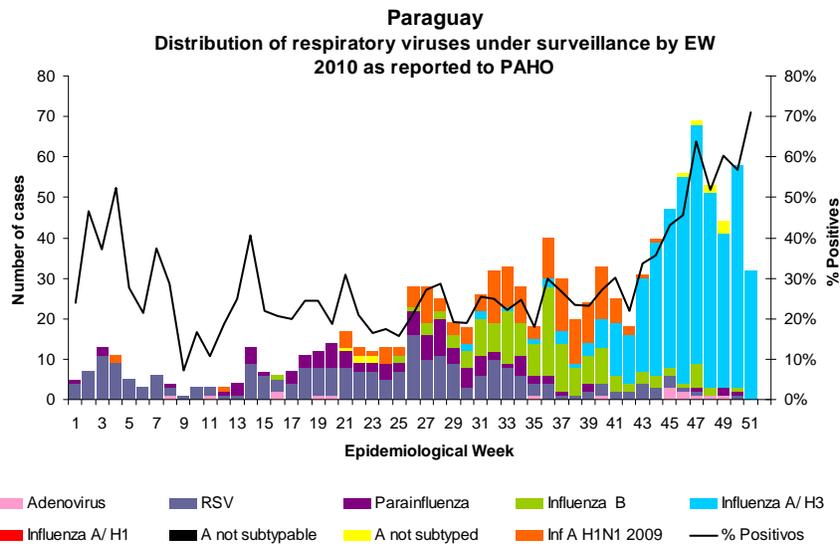
Central America



South America - Andean



South America – Southern Cone



Uruguay

¹ Canada. FluWatch Report. EW 50. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

² USA. Surveillance Summary. Week 51. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention