



Regional Update EW 02

Influenza
(January 24, 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 Canada, overall influenza activity decreased as compared to the previous week and remained within the expected levels for this time of year. In the United States, at the national level, ILI activity remained similar to the previous week. In Canada and Mexico, influenza A/H3 has predominated since the beginning of the influenza season, while in the United States, there has been a co-circulation of influenza A and B.
- Influenza activity in Central America and the Caribbean 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) 02, several influenza indicators have decreased across the country, as compared to the previous week. In EW 02, one region reported widespread influenza activity, 11 regions reported localized activity, 26 regions reported sporadic activity, and 16 regions reported no activity. During EW 02, the national ILI consultation rate remained within expected levels and was 28.1 per 1,000 consultations—a decrease as compared to the previous week (48.2 per 1,000 consultations). Children between 5 and 19 years had the highest ILI consultation rates (55.3 per 1,000 consultations). The percentage of samples positive for influenza was 23.1%. 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) remained similar as compared to the previous week.

In Mexico, of all samples tested, the percentage of samples positive for influenza or other respiratory viruses decreased from EW 50, 2010 (51.9%) to EW 2, 2011 (31.7%). The number of influenza A/H3 cases has decreased over the last 6 weeks, while the numbers of influenza B positive cases have remained stable.

In the United States², in EW 02, at the national level, the proportion of outpatient consultations for ILI (2.9%) was above the national baseline. At the regional level, three of the ten regions reported ILI activity to be above the region-specific baseline. Four states (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Oklahoma) experienced high ILI activity, while New York City and nine states experienced moderate ILI activity, seven states experienced low ILI activity, and 30 states experienced minimal ILI activity. The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was below the epidemic threshold. Two influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported this week. Influenza-associated hospitalization rates remained lower than what was observed during the same period in 2010 based on data from FluSurv-NET. During EW 02, 25.9% of samples tested were positive for influenza [influenza A/H3 (44.6%), followed by unsubtype influenza A, (33.5%) and influenza type B (15.2%)]. Of characterized influenza B viruses, 92% belong to the B/Victoria lineage, which is included in the 2010-2011 Northern Hemisphere vaccine and 8% belong to the B/Yamagata lineage.

Caribbean

CAREC* reported that the proportion of admissions for severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) remained similar to last week. No SARI deaths have been reported in the last three EW. Low numbers of influenza A/H3, influenza B and influenza A/H1N1 2009 have been co-circulating for the last three EWs.

In Cuba, in EW 01, of all samples tested, the percentage positive for respiratory viruses was 32.7%, and the percentage of samples positive for influenza viruses was 2.8%. During the last six EW, influenza A/H3 has been the predominant influenza virus circulating.

In the Dominican Republic, in EW 02, no influenza viruses were detected. Low numbers of parainfluenza were detected this week.

Central America

In Costa Rica, during the last 14 EWs, influenza type B has been the predominant influenza virus circulating. In EW 02, small numbers of adenovirus, parainfluenza and RSV were detected.

In Honduras, in EW 02, small numbers of positive respiratory viruses were detected.

In Nicaragua, no influenza viruses have been detected since EW 50, 2010.

South America – Andean

In Colombia, during the last two EWs, no respiratory viruses were detected.

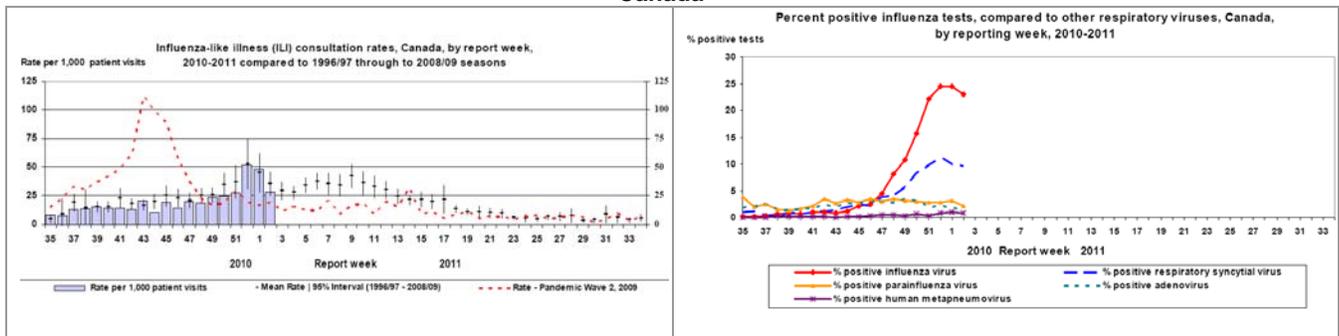
South America – Southern Cone

In Chile³, in EW 52, 2010, influenza activity remained at low levels. The national ILI consultation rate remained within expected levels (1.1 per 100,000 population). The proportion of emergency services consultations for respiratory illness, out of the total number of consultations, has been decreasing since ~EW 39, 2010. In EW 52, other respiratory viruses (RSV, adenovirus and parainfluenza) were detected.

Graphs

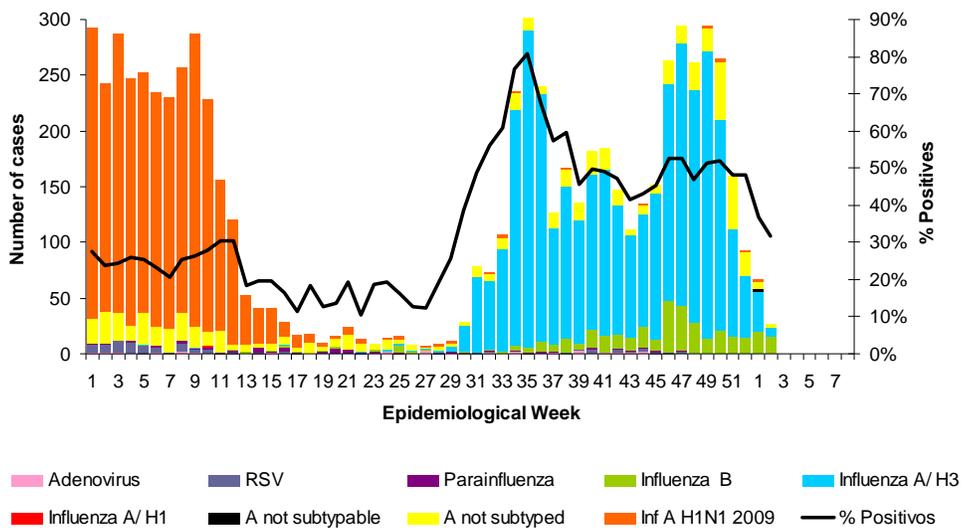
North America

Canada

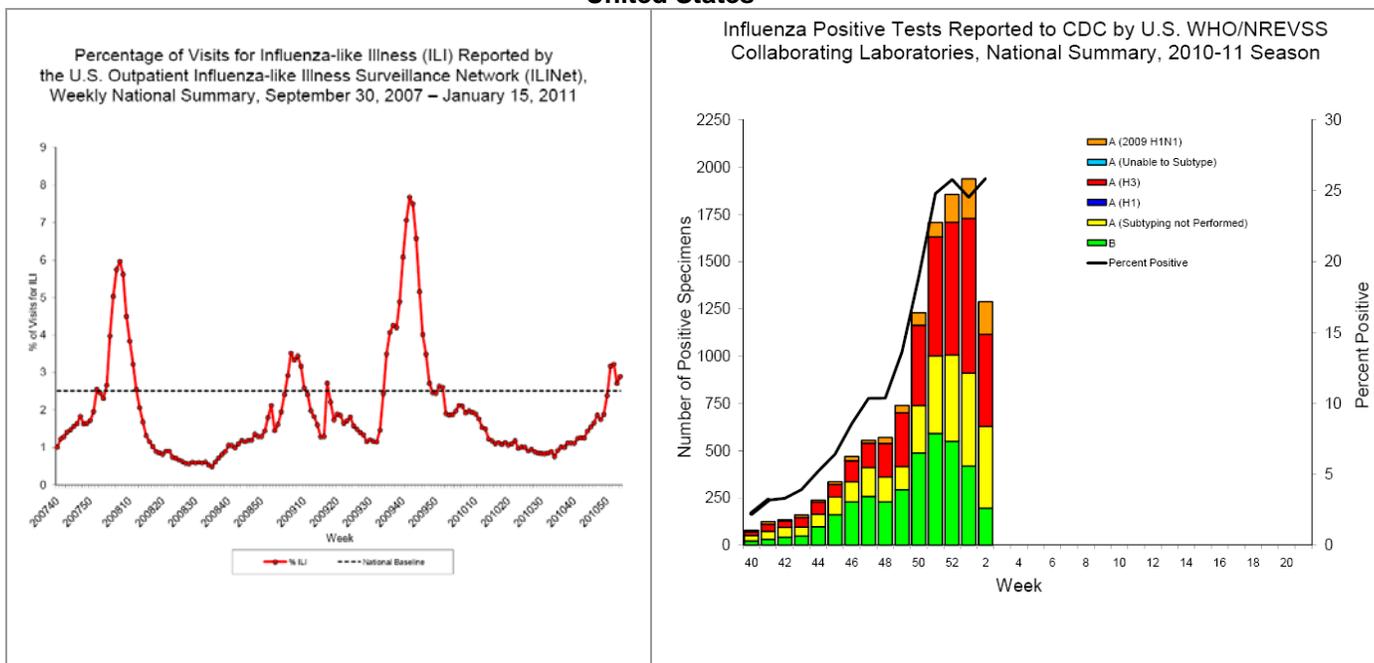


* Participating CAREC member countries, which include, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, were assessed together

Mexico Distribution of respiratory viruses under surveillance by EW 2010-2011 as reported to PAHO

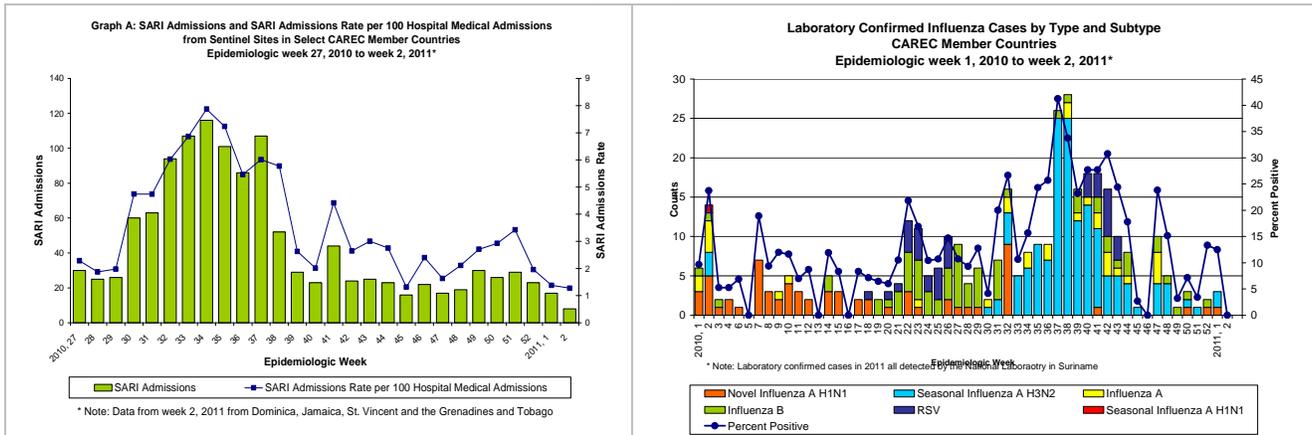


United States

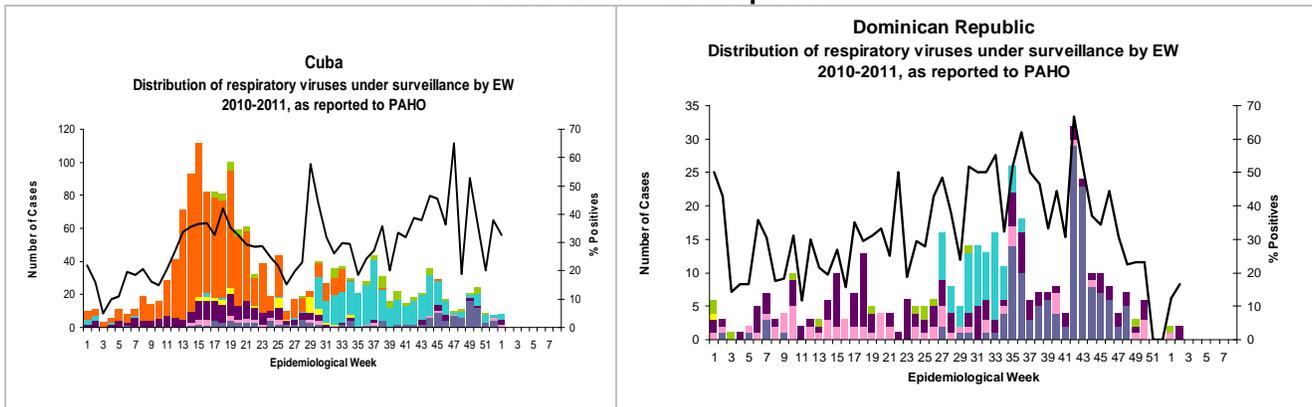


Caribbean

CAREC



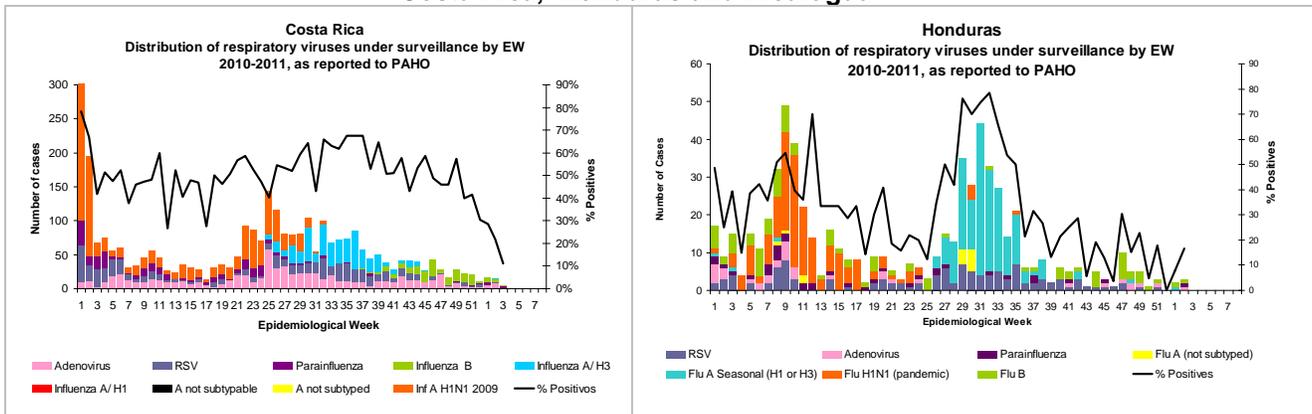
Cuba and Dominican Republic

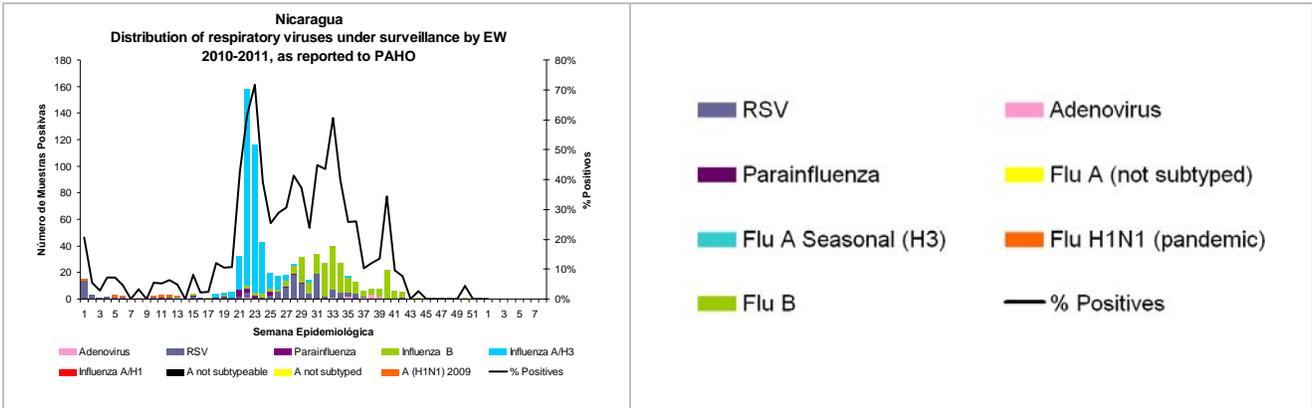


- Adenovirus
- RSV
- Parainfluenza
- Influenza B
- Influenza A/H3
- Influenza A/H1
- A not subtypable
- A not subtyped
- Inf A H1N1 2009
- % Positivos

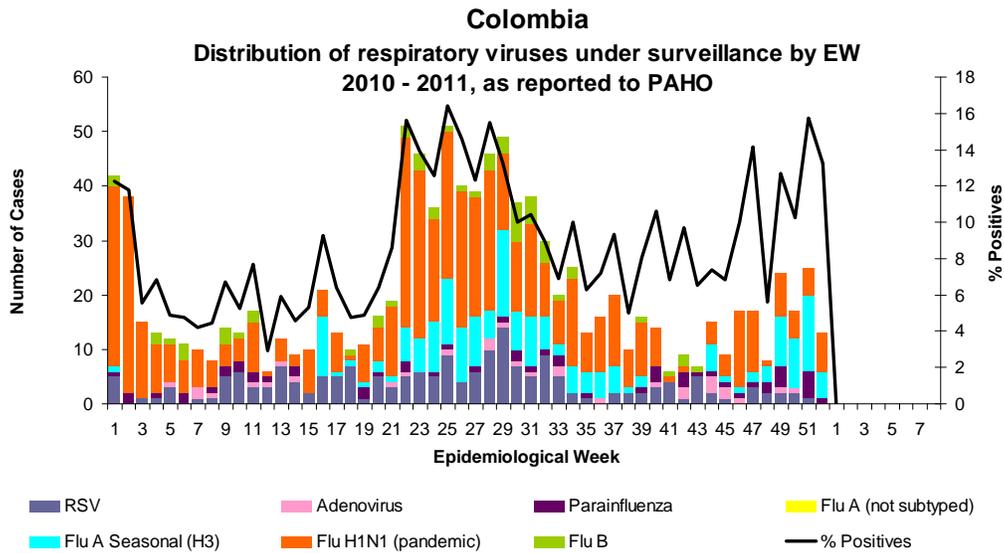
Central America

Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua

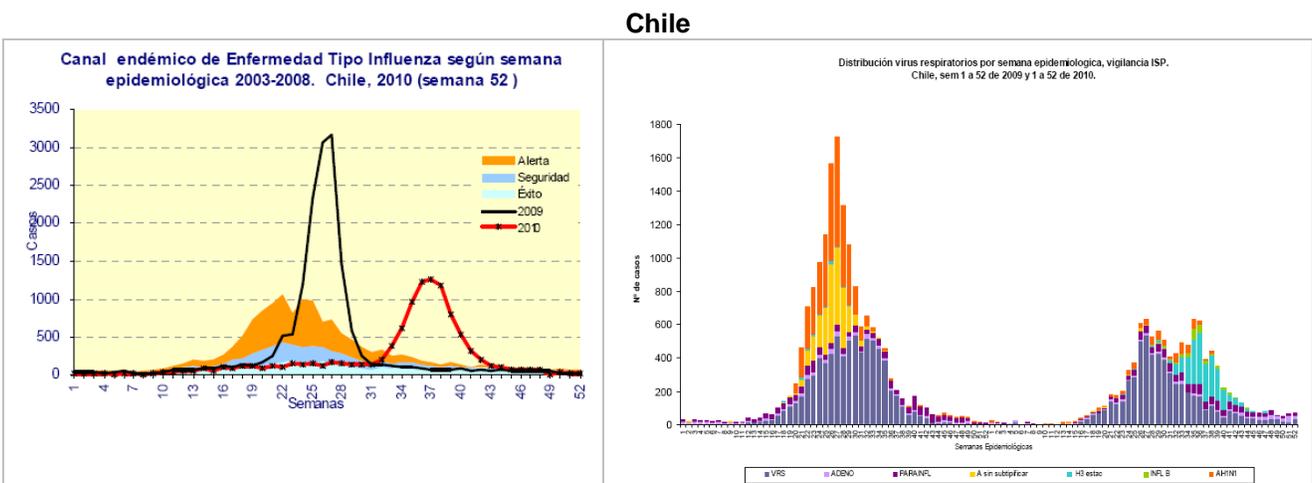




South America - Andean



South America – Southern Cone



¹ Canada. FluWatch Report. EW 02. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

² USA. Surveillance Summary. Week 02. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

³ Chile. Inform de influenza. SE 52