



Regional Update EW 03

Influenza
(February 1, 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, the Caribbean, the Andean Region, and Southern Cone remained low

Epidemiologic and virologic influenza update

North America

In Canada¹, in epidemiological week (EW) 03, overall influenza indicators decreased across the country, as compared to the previous week. In EW 03, four regions reported widespread influenza activity, 16 regions reported localized activity, 24 regions reported sporadic activity, and 12 regions reported no activity. During EW 03, the national ILI consultation rate remained within expected levels and was 36.1 per 1,000 consultations—a small increase as compared to the previous week (28.6 per 1,000 consultations). Children under 5 years of age had the highest ILI consultation rates (100.5 per 1,000 consultations). The percentage of samples positive for influenza was 20.8%, which represents a decrease from the prior 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) remained similar to previous weeks.

In Mexico, of all samples tested, the percentage of samples positive for influenza or other respiratory viruses decreased to less than 30%. 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 03, at the national level, the proportion of outpatient consultations for ILI (3.6%) was above the national baseline. At the regional level, four of ten regions reported ILI activity to be above their region-specific baseline. The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was below the epidemic threshold. Three 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 03, 30.1% of samples tested were positive for influenza [influenza A/H3 (33.3%), followed by unsubtype influenza A (27.1%), and influenza type B (20.6%)], which represents an increase as compared to EW 02. 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) increased slightly as compared to EW 02. No SARI deaths have been reported in the last four EWs. Low numbers of influenza A/H3, influenza B and influenza A/H1N1 2009 have been co-circulating for the last four EWs.

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

In Cuba, in EW 03, of all samples tested, the percentage positive for respiratory viruses was ~26%, 27% of which were positive for influenza. During the last two months, influenza A/H3 has been the predominant influenza virus circulating.

Central America

In Costa Rica, during the last 15 EWs, influenza type B has been the predominant influenza virus circulating. In EW 03, very small numbers of respiratory viruses were detected.

In Honduras, in EW 03, small numbers of respiratory viruses were detected.

South America – Andean

In Bolivia, over the last three weeks, few samples have been tested and very few have been positive for respiratory viruses.

South America – Southern Cone

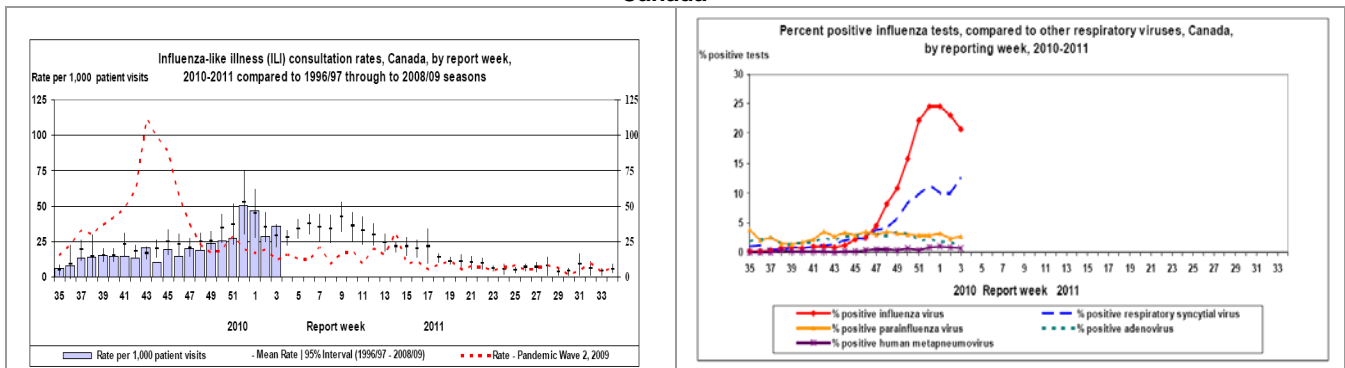
In Argentina, in EW 03, only five samples were positive for respiratory viruses and over the last month, few samples have tested positive for influenza.

In Paraguay, in EW 03, ten samples tested positive for respiratory viruses, all of which were influenza A/H3. In the last three months, influenza A/H3 has predominated among all respiratory viruses.

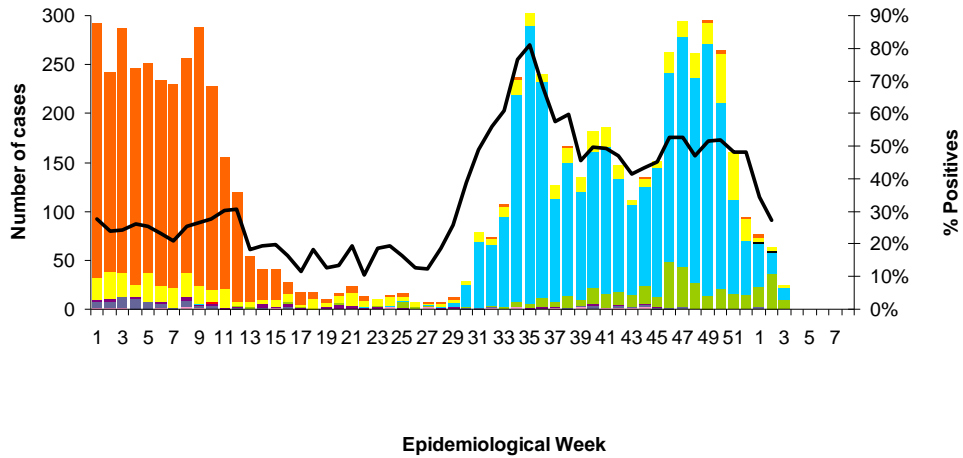
Graphs

North America

Canada

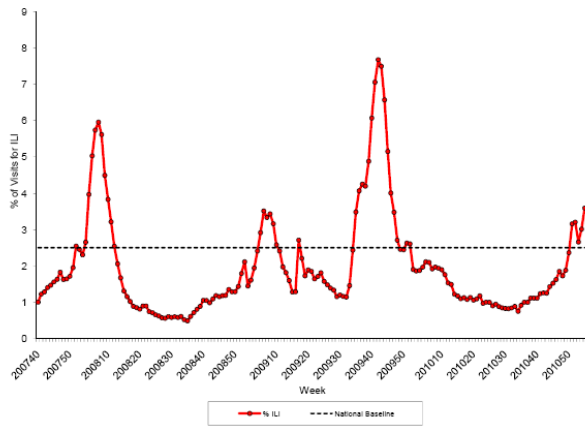


Mexico
Distribution of respiratory viruses under surveillance by EW
2010-2011 as reported to PAHO

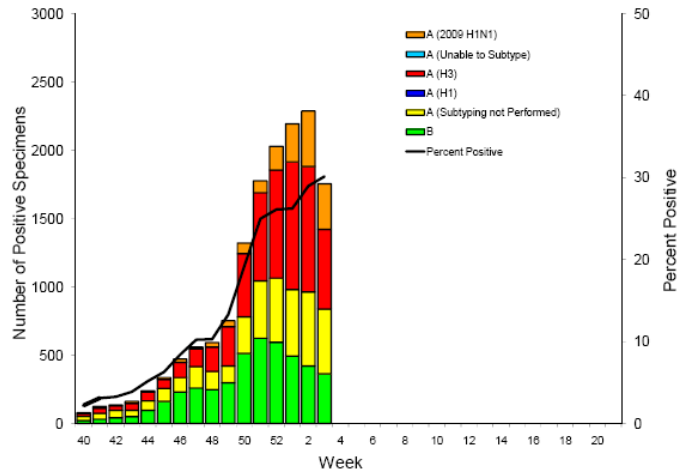


United States

Percentage of Visits for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Reported by the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet), Weekly National Summary, September 30, 2007 – January 22, 2011

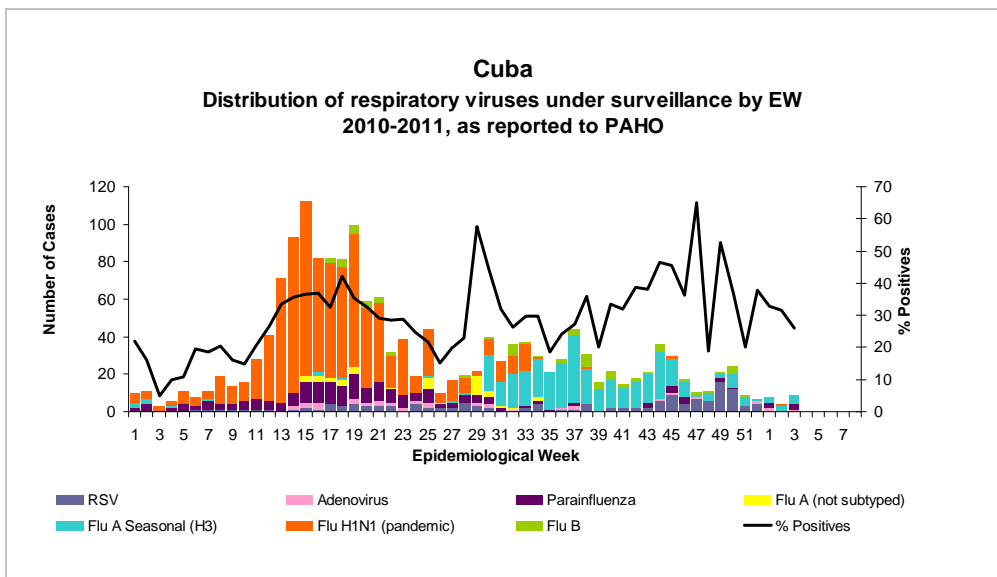
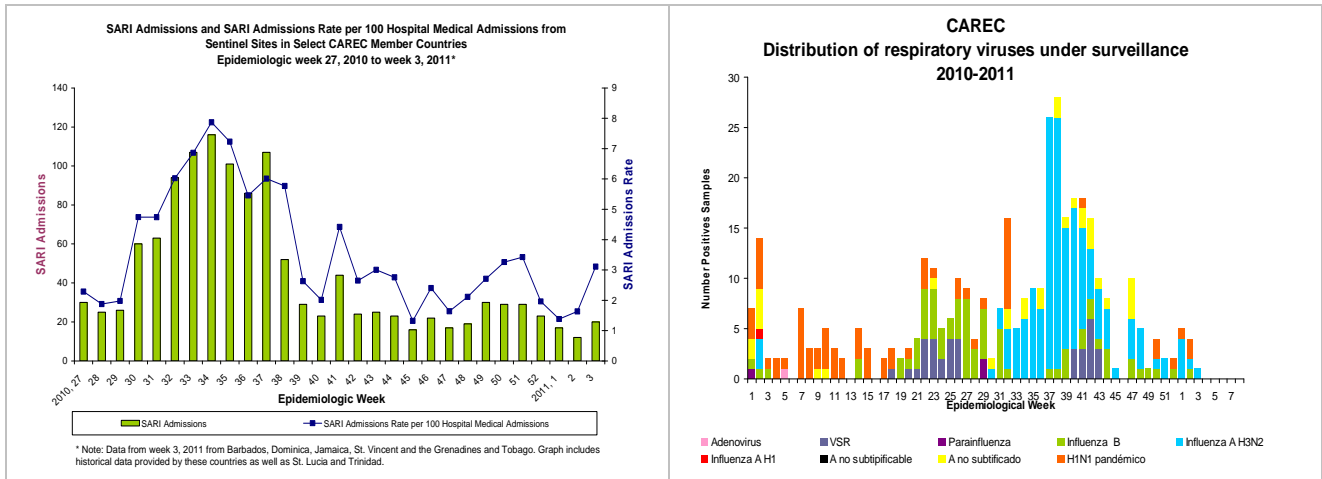


Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC by U.S. WHO/NREVSS Collaborating Laboratories, National Summary, 2010-11 Season



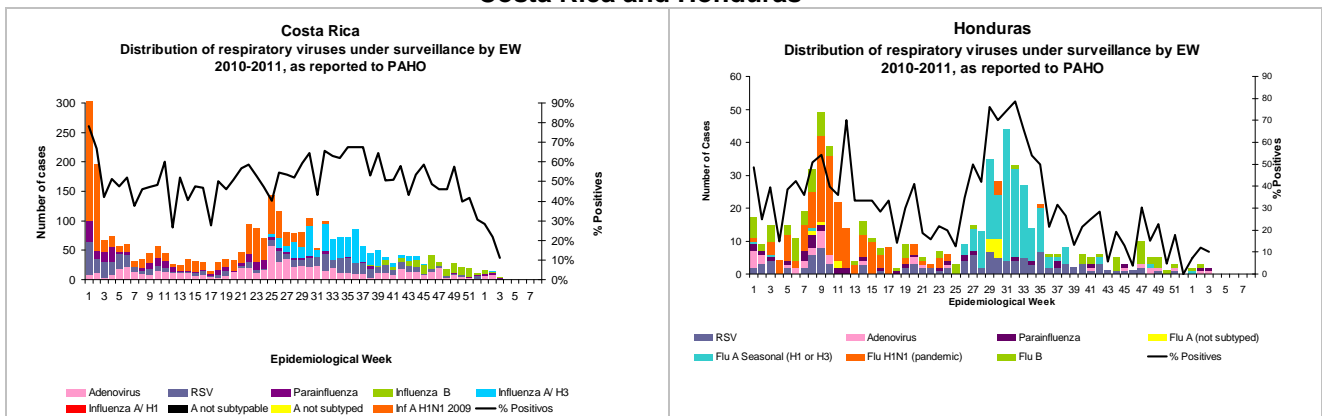
Caribbean

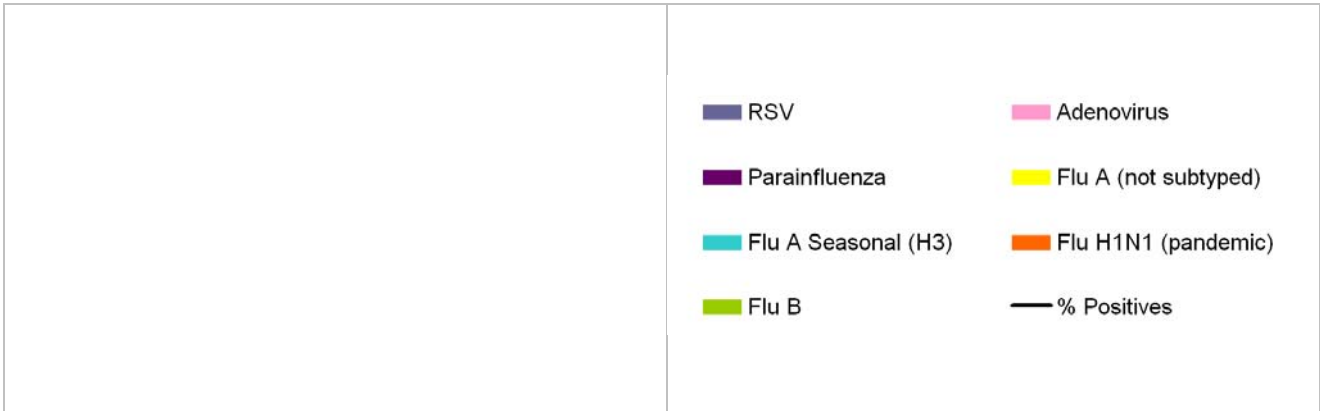
CAREC



Central America

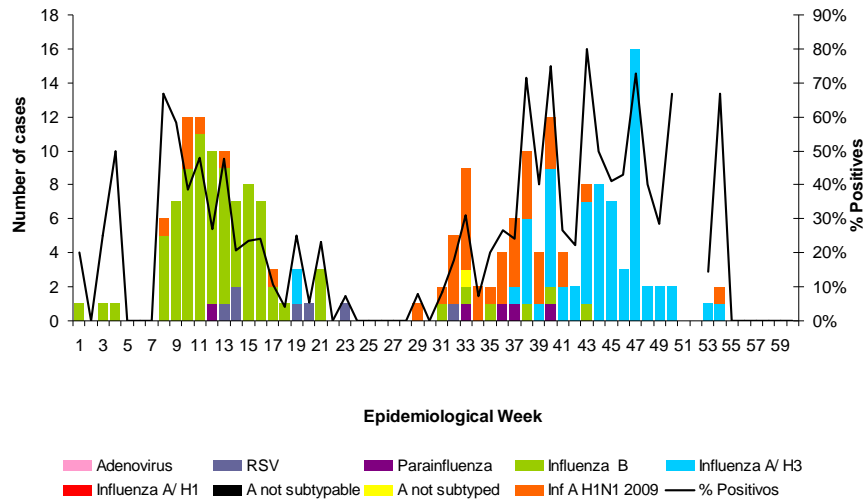
Costa Rica and Honduras





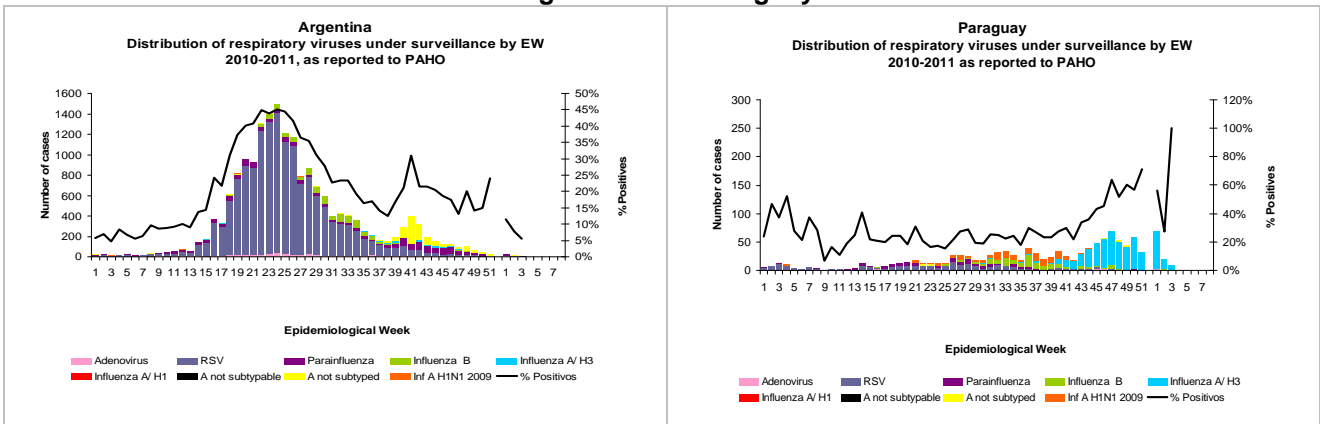
South America - Andean

Bolivia (Santa Cruz - CENETROP)
Distribution of respiratory viruses under surveillance by EW
2010 as reported to PAHO



South America – Southern Cone

Argentina and Paraguay



¹ Canada. FluWatch Report. EW 03. <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

² USA. Surveillance Summary. Week 03. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention