



Philadelphia Department of Public Health  
**Division of Disease Control**

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## **Health Update**

### **Surge in Late Season Influenza Activity**

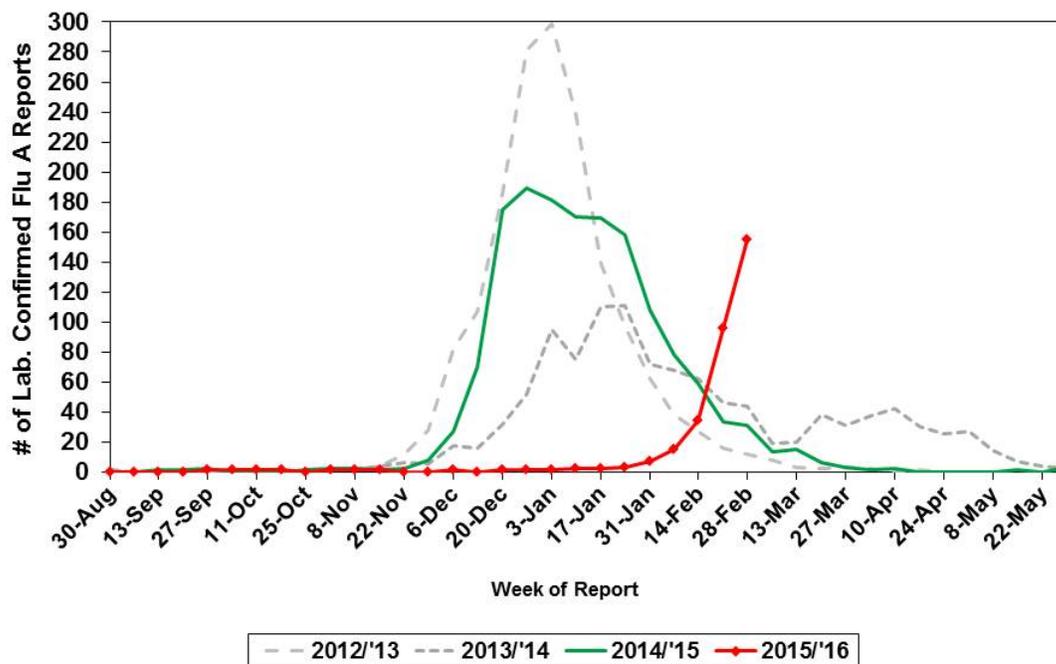
March 10, 2016

Based on surveillance data from select local clinical laboratories and hospitals, influenza activity is elevated and widespread in Philadelphia. The vast majority of cases are due to influenza A/H1N1. Circulating strains match well to this season's influenza vaccine, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports a preliminary overall influenza vaccine effectiveness of 59%. Given this late peak in flu activity, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) encourages continued administration of influenza vaccine for patients and healthcare providers not yet immunized this season. Approximately 44% of reported hospitalized cases (N=132) with a positive flu test are <50 years of age.

Antiviral treatment with oseltamivir (Tamiflu), zanamivir (Relenza), or peramivir (Rapivab) is recommended for patients suspected or confirmed to have influenza, particularly for persons at high risk of complications, those with severe or progressively worsening illness, and those requiring hospitalization. Antiviral treatment should not be delayed while waiting for RT-PCR confirmation of flu etiology, and ideally should be provided within 48 hours of symptom onset regardless of rapid-influenza test results. For patients with severe disease consistent with influenza, at high-risk for influenza complications, or demonstrating antiviral resistance, confirmatory laboratory testing should be performed using RT-PCR, viral culture, and/or DFA/IFA. These tests are widely available at clinical and public health reference laboratories including PDPH's Public Health Laboratory.

### **Laboratory-Based Surveillance for Influenza A Philadelphia, 2012/2013 through 2015/2016 Seasons\***

*\*Based on select hospital laboratories participating in surveillance across respiratory virus seasons*



All reports of hospitalized or fatal influenza, suspect novel influenza A infection, along with institutional outbreaks of respiratory illness, should be reported to the Division of Disease Control (DDC) at 215-685-6740. For more information including testing algorithms, a link to the most current information regarding antiviral medications from CDC, and a summary of current flu activity updated weekly please visit the Health Information Portal at <https://hip.phila.gov>

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Philadelphia Department of Public Health

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