The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) collects, compiles, and analyzes information on influenza activity year round in New York State (NYS) and produces this weekly report during the influenza season (October through the following May). 1

**Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report**

**During the week ending March 26, 2016**

- Influenza activity level was categorized as geographically widespread. This is the eighth consecutive week that widespread activity has been reported.
- There were **4,517** laboratory-confirmed influenza reports, a **26% decrease** over last week.
- Of the **2,418** specimens tested by NYS WHO/NREVSS laboratories, **768 (31.76%)** were positive for influenza.
- Of the specimens tested at Wadsworth Center, **99** were positive for influenza. **79** were influenza A (H1), **5** were influenza A (H3), **1** was influenza A (not subtyped), **7** were influenza B (Yamagata), and **7** were influenza B (Victoria).
- Reports of percent of patient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) from ILINet providers was **3.66%**, which is above the regional baseline of 2.3%.
- The number of patients hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed influenza was **727**, a **24% decrease** over last week.
- There were no influenza-associated pediatric deaths reported this week. There has been one influenza-associated...
Laboratory Reports of Influenza (including NYC)

Test results may identify influenza Type A, influenza Type B, or influenza without specifying Type A or B. Some tests only give a positive or negative result and cannot identify influenza type (not specified).
World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory & Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) Collaborating Laboratories

Seventeen clinical virology laboratories in NYS and NYC, including the Wadsworth Center, are WHO and/or NREVSS collaborating laboratories for influenza surveillance.

These labs report weekly the number of respiratory specimens tested and the number positive for influenza types A and B to CDC. Some labs also report the influenza A subtype (H1 or H3) and influenza B lineage (Victoria or Yamagata). Because denominator data is provided, the weekly percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza is calculated.

Influenza Virus Types and Subtypes Identified at Wadsworth Center (excluding NYC)

Wadsworth Center, the NYSDOH public health laboratory, tests specimens from sources including, outpatient healthcare providers (ILINet) and hospitals (FluSurv-NET).

There are 2 common subtypes of influenza A viruses – H1 and H3. Each subtype has a slightly different genetic makeup. Wadsworth also identifies the lineage of influenza B specimens – Yamagata or Victoria. Rarely, an influenza virus is unable to have it’s subtype or lineage identified by the laboratory.

Wadsworth sends a subset of positive influenza specimens to the CDC for further virus testing and characterization.
Emergency Department Visits for ILI-Syndromic Surveillance (excluding NYC)

Hospitals around NYS report the number of patients seen in their emergency departments with complaints of ILI. This is called syndromic surveillance.

An increase in visits to hospital emergency departments for ILI can be one sign that influenza has arrived in that part of NYS.

Syndromic surveillance does not reveal the actual cause of illness, but is thought to correlate with emergency department visits for influenza.

Influenza Antiviral Resistance Testing

The Wadsworth Center Virology Laboratory performs surveillance testing for antiviral drug resistance.

NYS Antiviral Resistance Testing Results on Samples Collected Season to date, 2015-16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oseltamivir</th>
<th>Zanamivir</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Samples</td>
<td>Resistant Viruses, Number (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza A (H3N2)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Influenza A (H1N1)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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I. All samples tested for oseltamivir resistance by pyrosequencing for E119V, R292K, and N294S in the neuraminidase gene (NA), and a subset tested by NA dideoxy sequencing for other variations known to cause, or suspected of causing, resistance to neuraminidase inhibitor drugs including zanamivir and oseltamivir.

II. Samples tested by whole gene dideoxy sequencing of the neuraminidase gene. Sequence data reviewed for variations known to cause, or suspected of causing, resistance to neuraminidase inhibitor drugs including zanamivir and oseltamivir.

III. All samples tested by pyrosequencing for the H275Y variant in the neuraminidase gene which confers resistance to oseltamivir, and a subset tested by NA dideoxy sequencing for other variations known to cause, or suspected of causing, resistance to neuraminidase inhibitor drugs including zanamivir and oseltamivir.

Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) (excluding NYC)

The NYSDOH works with ILINet healthcare providers who report the total number of patients seen and the total number of those with complaints of influenza-like illness (ILI) every week in an outpatient setting.

The CDC uses trends from past years to determine a regional baseline rate of doctors’ office visits for ILI. For NYS, the regional baseline is currently 2.3%. Numbers above this regional baseline suggest high levels of illness consistent with influenza in the state.

Note that surrounding holiday weeks, it is not uncommon to notice a fluctuation in the ILI rate. This is a result of the different pattern of patient visits for non-urgent needs.

Additional information regarding national antiviral resistance testing, as well as recommendations for antiviral treatment and chemoprophylaxis of influenza virus infection, can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/.
Patients Hospitalized with Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza (including NYC)

Hospitals in NYS and NYC report the number of hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza to NYSDOH. 175 (95%) of 184 hospitals reported this week.

Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Network (FluSurv-NET)

As part of the CDC's FluSurv-Net, the NYS Emerging Infections Program (EIP) conducts enhanced surveillance for hospitalized cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza among residents of 15 counties.\(^5\) Medical chart reviews are completed, and underlying health conditions noted on all identified cases from October 1 through April 30 of the following year.

\(^5\)Counties include, in the Capital District: Albany, Columbia, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Schoharie; in the Western Region: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Wayne, and Yates
Healthcare-associated Influenza Activity (including NYC)

Hospitals and nursing homes in NYS self-report outbreaks of influenza. A healthcare-associated outbreak is defined as one or more confirmed or two or more suspect cases of influenza in persons who were admitted to the facility with no signs or symptoms of influenza infection. Outbreaks are considered confirmed only with positive laboratory testing. This may include a positive rapid antigen test if no other more advanced testing (polymerase chain reaction, viral culture) is performed.6


Pediatric influenza-associated deaths reported (including NYC)

Local health departments report pediatric influenza-associated deaths to NYSDOH.

Flu-associated deaths in children younger than 18 years old are nationally notifiable. Influenza-associated deaths in persons 18 years and older are not notifiable.

All pediatric flu-associated deaths included in this report are laboratory-confirmed.

![Graph showing number of deaths by month and year of death for NYC from 2012-13 to 2015-16.](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/control/respiratory_disease_checklist.htm)