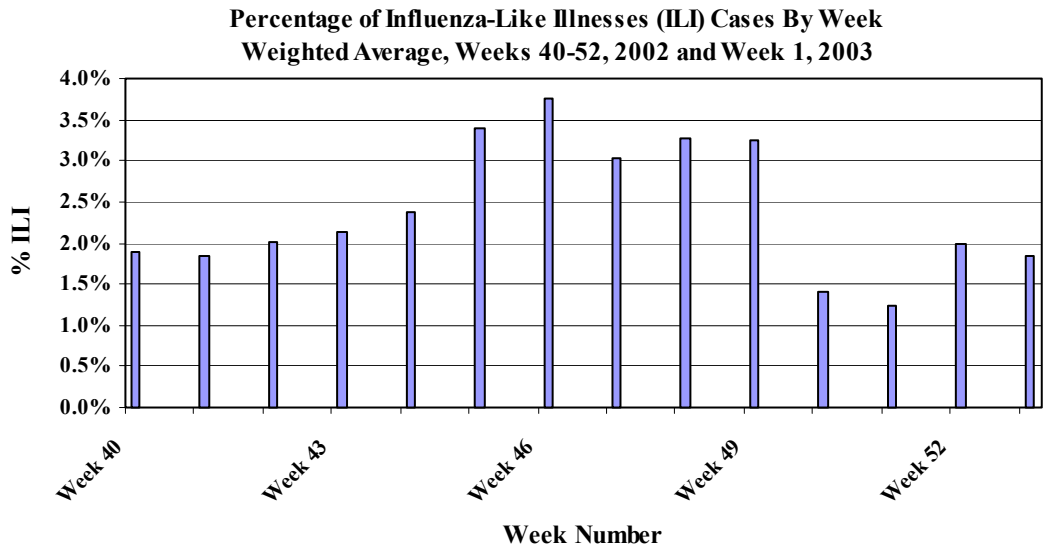


Date: January 10, 2003
To: Health Care Provider
From: Linh Nguyen, MPH, Epidemiologist
Subject: Influenza Report for Week 1 (December 29, 2002 to January 4, 2003)

Criteria for inclusion as a case of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) are fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ (37.8°C) and cough or sore throat. Health care providers wishing to participate in the ongoing Clark County Health District (CCHD) Influenza Surveillance Program should contact Linh Nguyen, Surveillance Coordinator, at (702) 383-1378.

Fifty-one cases of ILI were reported during week 1. The weighted average over the seven reporting sites was **1.8%**, which is similar to the national baseline of 1.9%. The percentage of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) in Las Vegas was **7.9%**. The national P&I mortality for week 1 is not yet available. The national P&I mortality for week 52 was 7.4%. The percentages of ILI cases in Clark County for weeks 40 to 52, 2002 and for week 1, 2003 of the 2002-2003 surveillance season are presented in the following figure. The percentage of ILI might be skewed for weeks 50 to 52, since ILI data from several sentinel sites was not available.



According to recently published data in the Journal of the American Medical Association, an estimated average of 36,000 people die from influenza-related complications each year in the US, up from 20,000 in previous Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates. The increase is explained in part by the aging of the US population. Over the past several decades, the number of people age 85 and older in the US has doubled. According to the study, persons aged 85 years or older were 32 times more likely to die of influenza-associated pneumonia, and 16 times more likely to die of other influenza-associated illnesses, compared with persons aged 65 to 69 years. Yearly immunization with influenza vaccine continues to be the primary strategy for preventing influenza-associated deaths.

Reference:

Thompson, W et al. Mortality Associated with Influenza and Respiratory Syncytial Virus in the United States. JAMA. 2003; 289:179-186.

This newsletter is also posted on the Clark County Health District webpage for health care practitioners. See http://www.cchd.org/physician/physician_only.htm for this and other health and bioterrorism related information.

Each year from October through May, the Centers for Disease Control provide weekly updates on U.S. influenza activity. The information is online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>