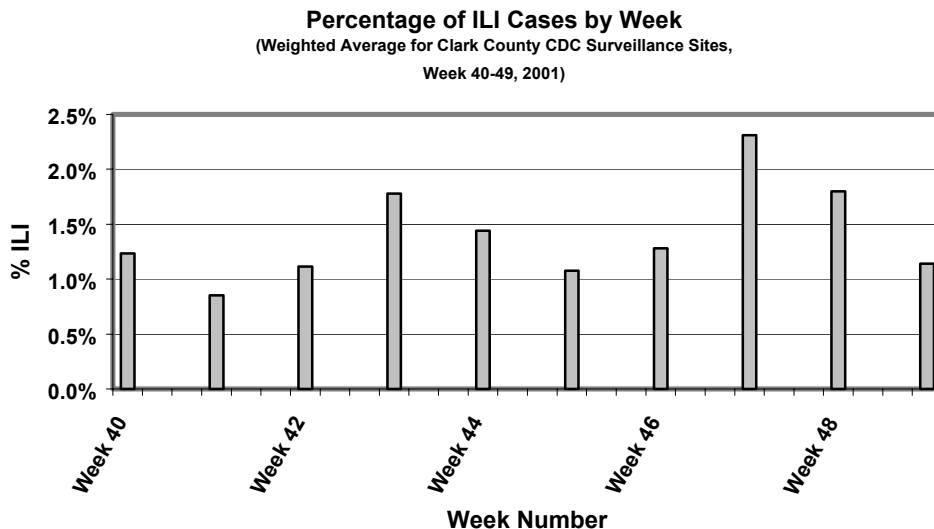


Date: December 14, 2001
To: Health Care Provider
From: Linh Nguyen, MPH, Epidemiologist
Subject: Influenza Report for Week 49 (December 2-8, 2001)

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.

One hundred thirty-two cases of ILI were reported during week 49. The weighted average over the eleven reporting sites is **1.1%**. The national baseline for the overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI is 1.9%. The percentage of deaths attributed to pneumonia in Las Vegas was **6.0%** for week 49, which is under the nationwide proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia at 6.4% for week 48. The percentage of ILI cases for surveillance sites in Clark County for week 40 to 49 is presented in the following figure.



Influenza causes substantial morbidity in adults and children with asthma. Yearly, fewer than ten percent of patients with asthma are vaccinated against influenza partly due to concern that vaccination may cause exacerbations of asthma. However, following a multi-center investigation, researchers of the American Lung Association concluded that the inactivated influenza vaccine does not worsen asthma and is safe to administer to adults and children with asthma, even to patients with severe asthma.¹ Given the potential serious consequences of influenza in this population, health care providers should urge patients with asthma to be immunized annually.

Weekly updates by CDC on U.S. influenza activity are available online at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>

Reference:

1. The American Lung Association Asthma Clinical Research Center. The Safety of Inactivated Influenza Vaccine in Adults and Children with Asthma. N Engl J Med 2001;345:1529-36.