

Microbe Monthly

Communicable Disease Report

September 2009

El Paso County Department
of Health & Environment

Novel H1N1 Influenza Testing Update

As of September 1, 2009, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) has changed Novel Influenza A (H1N1) testing and reporting criteria. The goal of state laboratory confirmatory (PCR) testing for influenza is public health monitoring of circulating influenza viruses.

State laboratory testing for influenza (including 2009 H1N1) is not intended for diagnostic or clinical management purposes. Monitoring novel H1N1 among **hospitalized** patients is a priority for public health.



Testing at CDPHE

- Hospitals outside the 5-county Denver metro area are asked to submit specimens for surveillance testing for 2009 H1N1 as well as seasonal influenza from:
 - Up to 10 patients per month** who are being ADMITTED with influenza-associated illness **AND** who are rapid influenza test positive
- CDPHE will not accept or test any specimens of patients who are not hospitalized

Reporting Influenza cases

- Influenza-associated hospitalizations are a reportable condition to public health. ALL influenza hospitalizations with any type of positive flu test, seasonal or novel, should be reported to public health.
- Please notify the state or local health department if DEATH occurs in a hospitalized influenza case.
- Non-hospitalized flu cases are **not** reportable, unless they result in a pediatric death

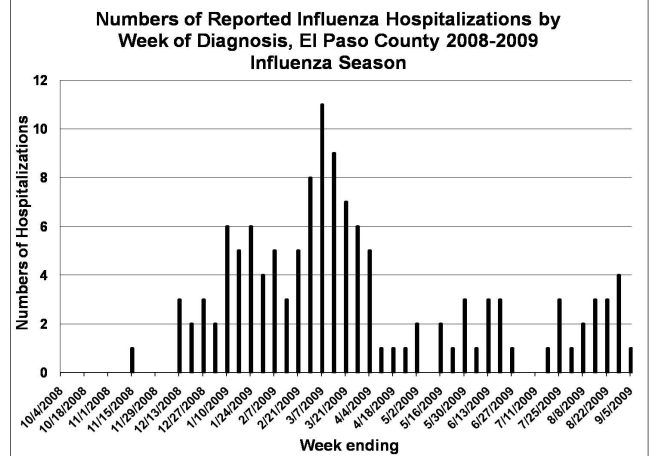
For questions or to report a hospitalized influenza case, please contact the El Paso County Department of Health and Environment (EPCDHE) Communicable Disease program at 719-578-3220.

El Paso County Disease Trends

In August 2009, 77 communicable diseases were reported and investigated: Campylobacter (8), cryptosporidiosis (3), Giardia (3), Haemophilus influenzae (1), hepatitis A (1), chronic hepatitis B (5), influenza-related hospitalizations (14), invasive pneumococcal disease (1), novel H1N1 virus (18), Salmonella (11), STEC (Shiga-toxin producing E. coli) (2), varicella (2) and viral meningitis (7).

CD Program staff investigated 4 outbreaks in August: 2 H1N1 (1 child care, 1 military); and 2 GI illness (1 restaurant related, 1 health care related).

The chart to the right illustrates a typical epidemiologic curve for the normal flu season (October to mid-May), but then shows how hospitalized influenza cases continued to be reported through the summer due to the arrival of novel H1N1.



Hot Topics—State and National

- Outbreak of hepatitis A among Ethiopian adoptees and their contacts: Several cases of hepatitis A have been reported among recently adopted infants from Ethiopia or their caregivers. Four confirmed cases have been identified nationally, with 3 in Colorado. Two infant adoptees were IgM+ for HAV, but asymptomatic. Some caregivers outside the infants' households have developed illness. ACIP recommends that all persons who will have close contact with international adoptees from hepatitis A endemic countries be vaccinated. For more information, go to: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/downloads/min-feb09.pdf.
- Since January 1, 2009, 26 laboratory confirmed cases of skunk rabies have been reported in Colorado, including 6 in El Paso County. The presence of rabies in wild animals in our county underscores the importance of vaccinating pets animals against rabies.

Contact Information

CD/TB Program

Weekday Hours (M-Th)* 719-578-3220

After-Hours Emergency 719-385-9622

Immunizations

719-578-3272

Environmental Health

719-575-8636

***Note: Health Department regular hours are Monday—Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Weekday Hours (M-F) 303-692-2700

After-Hours 303-370-9395