

# Ontario Influenza Bulletin

Early Fall Edition

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Weeks 37-44 (Sept. 1 to Oct. 30, 2004)

## Introduction

As stated in Volume 7, Issue 28 of the Ontario Influenza Bulletin the start date for year-round respiratory infection surveillance has been established as September 1, with an end date of August 31. Therefore, this installment of the Ontario Influenza Bulletin represents the start of the 2004/05 respiratory infection surveillance period. The current issue is a summary of early fall influenza activity and covers the time period from September 1 to October 30, 2004. Reportable Disease Information System (RDIS) and institutional respiratory infection outbreak data for Ontario will be presented using the September 1 start date. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) started its 2004/05 surveillance year on August 22, 2004. As such, data from the Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control (CIDPC) of PHAC will be reported accordingly.

## Influenza Activity in Ontario

### Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Data

During the period of influenza surveillance between August 22 and October 30 (reporting weeks 35-44), a total of 8 laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza were reported (6 influenza A, 2 influenza B) by Ontario laboratories to the CIDPC. Throughout this period there were 32 cases of RSV, 18 cases of parainfluenza, and 24 adenoviruses, all of which were laboratory-confirmed (Appendix 1). Overall, the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of respiratory viruses was low throughout this period of reporting.

### Reportable Disease Information System

Between September 1 and October 30, 2004, 12 cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza A and 1 case of laboratory-confirmed influenza B were reported to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) through RDIS by Ontario's health units (Appendix 2).

### Respiratory Infection Outbreak Database (Source: Appendix D's-preliminary reports and E's-final reports)

From September 1 to October 30, 2004, 109 respiratory

infection outbreaks were reported by Ontario's health units to the MOHLTC (Appendix 3). Of these, only 3 were outbreaks of influenza A. Additionally, 14 out of the 109 outbreaks were due to other organisms. The majority of respiratory infection outbreaks occurred in Long-Term Care Homes (99/109).

Taken together, data from the CIDPC, RDIS, and the Respiratory Infection Outbreak Database indicate low activity in Ontario during September and October, 2004.

## Influenza Activity in Canada

A summary of influenza activity in Canada as reported in FluWatch is provided below. Additional and more comprehensive information on influenza activity in Canada, along with definitions of influenza activity, can be found at PHAC's website:

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

As noted in Table 1, influenza activity in Canada was low in September but increased during October, 2004. The number of patients with influenza-like illness (ILI) seen by sentinel physicians in Canada during September and October ranged from 9/1,000 office visits (week 38, ending September 18) to 16/1,000 office visits (week 42, ending October 16). In Ontario the number of patients with ILI seen by sentinel physicians ranged from 7/1,000 office visits (week 44, ending October 30) to 17/1,000 office visits (week 39, ending September 25).

**Table 1.** Influenza Activity in Canada by province, September and October, 2004.

Month [2004]	Sporadic Activity*	Localized Activity*
September	B.C., ON, YT	ON (East)
October	B.C., AB, SK, ON	B.C., AB, ON (Central East)

\* Note: Activity reported at least once in that month; activity is not constant for the whole month.

## Strain Characterization

The majority of influenza viruses that were identified by

the National Microbiology Lab between August 22, 2004 and October 30, 2004 were A/Fujian/411/02-like; a B/Shanghai/361/02-like virus was also identified (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Influenza strains identified by the National Microbiology Lab. (N = 13)

Strain	No. of Positive Identifications
	August 22, 2004 to October 30, 2004
A/Fujian/411/02-like	12 (92.31%)
B/Shanghai/361/02-like	1 ( 7.69%)

Please note that dates in the following sections may not correspond exactly due to differences in surveillance and reporting timeframes between international and Canadian agencies.

### Activity in the United States

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) produces a weekly report on influenza activity from October through May. Influenza activity levels in the U.S. were low in October and were not reported for September.

#### Antigenic Characterization:

Between October 3 and October 30, 2004, 13 influenza A (H3N2) viruses were isolated by the National Respiratory and

Enteric Virus Surveillance System and 3 A/Fujian/411/02-like (H3N2) influenza A viruses were isolated by the CDC.

For information on activity in the United States please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

### Europe

The European Influenza Surveillance Scheme began reporting influenza activity for the season in the first week of October.

Influenza activity was low in Europe from October 3 to October 31, although an increase in the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza was observed in week 44.

From September 5, 2004 to October 31, 2004, 24 influenza virus detections were made; 7 influenza B, 8 influenza A that were not subtyped and 9 influenza A that were sub-typed (3 A/Wellington/1/2004 H3N2 and 1 A/Fujian/411/2002 H3N2-like).

For information on influenza activity in Europe please visit: [http://www.eiss.org/cgi-files/bulletin\\_v2.cgi](http://www.eiss.org/cgi-files/bulletin_v2.cgi)

### International

Influenza activity remained low in most parts of the world from September through October.

For more information please visit the WHO's website for the weeks 36-44, 2004:

<http://www.who.int/wer/2004/en/>

### Appendix 1. Respiratory viruses isolated and reported to the CIDPC (2004/05 Season).

	Flu Isolates A and B†			Other Respiratory Viruses						
	(Total)‡	Influenza A† (Total)‡	Influenza B† (Total)‡	RSV† (Total)‡	PIV1† (Total)‡	PIV2† (Total)‡	PIV3† (Total)‡	PIV4† (Total)‡	Other PIVs† (Total)‡	Adenoviruses† (Total)‡
Week ending September 4, 2004 (week 36)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (4)
Week ending September 18, 2004 (week 38)	2 (2)	1 (1)	1 (1)	5 (5)	2 (2)	0 (0)	2 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (4)
Week ending October 2, 2004 (week 40)	2 (4)	1 (2)	1 (2)	1 (6)	0 (2)	0 (0)	1 (8)	1 (1)	0 (0)	6 (10)
Week ending October 16, 2004 (week 42)	1 (5)	1 (3)	0 (2)	2 (8)	0 (2)	3 (3)	0 (8)	0 (1)	0 (0)	6 (16)
Week ending October 30, 2004 (week 44)	3 (8)	3 (6)	0 (2)	24 (32)	2 (4)	0 (3)	1 (9)	0 (1)	1 (1)	8 (24)

† Change from previous 2 week period

‡ Accumulative totals from August 22, 2004

**Appendix 2. Lab-Confirmed Cases of Influenza A and B by Health Unit, September 1, 2004 to October 30, 2004 (Source: RDIS)**

Health Unit	Week ending September 18, 2004 (week 38)*		Week ending October 2, 2004 (week 40)		Week ending October 16, 2004 (week 42)		Week ending October 30, 2004 (week 44)		Total	
	Influenza A	Influenza B	Influenza A	Influenza B	Influenza A	Influenza B	Influenza A	Influenza B	Influenza A	Influenza B
Algoma										
Brant										
Chatham - Kent										
Durham										
Eastern Ontario										
Eglin - St. Thomas										
Grey-Bruce										
Haldimand-Norfolk										
Haliburton KPPR										
Halton										
Hamilton-Wentworth										
Hastings-P. E.	1								1	
Huron										
Kingston & FLA		1								1
Lambton										
Leeds - Grenville										
Middlesex-London										
Muskoka-Parry Sound										
Niagara										
Northwest										
North Bay										
Ottawa-Carleton	6								6	
Oxford										
Peel	1								1	
Perth										
Peterborough										
Porcupine										
Renfrew										
Simcoe										
Sudbury										
Timiskaming										
Thunder Bay										
Toronto	1		2				1		4	
Waterloo										
Well - Duf - Guelph										
Windsor - Essex										
York										
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

\* Starting September 1, 2004.

### Appendix 3. Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions from September 1, 2004 to October 30, 2004.

Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions	Week ending	Week ending	Week ending	Week ending
	September 18, 2004 (week 38)†	October 2, 2004 (week 40)†	October 16, 2004 (week 42)†	October 30, 2004 (week 44)†
<b>Total Respiratory Infection Outbreaks in Institutions</b>	<b>29 (29)</b>	<b>32 (61)</b>	<b>23 (84)</b>	<b>25 (109)</b>
Influenza A outbreaks	2 (2)	0 (2)	0 (2)	1 (3)
Flu A & other organisms	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Influenza B	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Other organisms	3 (3)	4 (7)	3 (10)	4 (14)
Unknown	18 (18)	10 (28)	13 (41)	15 (56)
Laboratory results pending	5 (5)	14 (19)	6 (25)	1 (26)
No specimen sent for laboratory testing	1 (1)	4 (5)	1 (6)	4 (10)
<b>Outbreaks by Onset Period</b>				
Onset of illness in index case October 27/03 onward	19 (19)	32 (61)	22 (73)	25 (98)
Onset of illness in index case prior to October 27/03	10 (10)	0 (10)	1 (11)	0 (11)
<b>Ongoing Outbreaks</b>	<b>20 (20)</b>	<b>25 (45)</b>	<b>11 (56)</b>	<b>-3 (53)</b>
Influenza A	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Influenza A & other organisms	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Influenza B	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Other organisms	1 (1)	3 (4)	-1 (3)	-1 (2)
Unknown	14 (14)	4 (18)	7 (25)	-7 (18)
Laboratory results pending	5 (5)	14 (19)	6 (25)	1 (26)
No specimen sent for laboratory testing	0 (0)	4 (4)	-1 (3)	3 (6)
<b>Categories and Types of Institutions</b>	<b>29 (29)</b>	<b>32 (61)</b>	<b>23 (84)</b>	<b>25 (109)</b>
<b>LTCHs</b>				
Nursing Home (NH), Home for the Aged (HFA)	25 (25)	30 (55)	21 (76)	23 (99)
Combined (e.g. NH/HFA, NH/Hospital)	0 (0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Unspecified	0 (0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
<b>Hospitals</b>	<b>0 (0)</b>	<b>2 (2)</b>	<b>1 (3)</b>	<b>1 (4)</b>
<b>Other (Retirement Homes &gt;10 beds, children's residences)</b>	<b>4 (4)</b>	<b>0 (4)</b>	<b>1 (5)</b>	<b>1 (6)</b>

† The first number in this column represents the change from the previous two week period. The cumulative total from September 1, 2004 is presented in brackets.  
 Note: Negative values result from: Outbreaks being declared over, reclassification of laboratory results, reclassification of institutions, deletions, and corrective changes made to the database