
2017-2018 Community Influenza Surveillance Report Update of Current Status November 15, 2017

The 2017-18 influenza season is underway and the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) is once again pleased to provide weekly *Community Influenza Surveillance Reports*.

The purpose of the *Community Influenza Surveillance Report* (CISR) is to provide health professionals, community partners, media, and the community with up to date information on influenza and respiratory illness in London and Middlesex County. These weekly reports include an overall assessment, details of the current level of influenza activity and useful links. The MLHU receives reports and data from laboratories, health care and other partners each day which our epidemiologists review and analyse before we share our assessment and recommendations each Wednesday during influenza season. Influenza season can extend from the end of August to the end of May.

Overall assessment

The current level of influenza activity in Middlesex-London is low, however, most indicators are higher when compared to the previous reporting week.

Analysis and Action

The influenza season is underway with virus activity increasing gradually over time. If they haven't done so already, local residents are encouraged to their seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as possible, well in advance of the peak in influenza activity.

Details of Current Local Activity

Between November 5th and 11th, three laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza A were reported to the Health Unit, one of whom was hospitalized.

Since September 1, 2017, a total of five laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases have been reported. One sample has been subtyped as influenza A (H3) while the remaining four samples have not been subtyped.

To date, there have been no influenza outbreaks declared in long-term care facilities since September 1st, 2017.

Appendix A provides more details about laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, as well as other local indicators of respiratory illness.

Useful Websites

- The latest Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, issued by Public Health Ontario (PHO), is available at <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/SurveillanceServices/Pages/Ontario-Respiratory-Virus-Bulletin.aspx>
- The latest FluWatch report, issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), is available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>.
- To find a free flu shot clinic near you, visit the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's "Get the flu shot" web page at <http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-flu-shot/>.

Appendix A

Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators for Middlesex-London November 5th to 11th, 2017

Table 1: Summary of laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, Middlesex-London and Ontario, 2017-2018 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Number Reported: <i>Year to Date (from September 1, 2017)</i>	Recent Trends
Laboratory-confirmed cases¹	Nov. 5-11 (week 45) ²	Influenza A – 3 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A – 5 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Higher than the previous week (Oct. 29-Nov. 4) when no cases were reported.
Influenza sub-types¹	Nov. 5-11	Influenza A(H3) – 1 case Influenza A not subtyped – 2 cases	Influenza A(H3) – 1 case Influenza A not subtyped – 4 cases	
Hospitalizations¹	Nov. 5-11	1	3	Higher than the previous week (Oct. 29-Nov. 4) when no hospitalizations were reported.
Deaths¹	Nov. 5-11	0	0	
Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care	Nov. 5-11	0	0	
Percentage of samples that are positive for influenza (Ontario)³	Oct. 29-Nov. 4 (week 44) ²	Influenza A – 1.1% positivity Influenza B – 0.1% positivity	N/A	Influenza A: Higher than 0.8% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Oct. 22-28). Influenza B: Lower than 0.3% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Oct. 22-28).

Notes:

1 Numbers are subject to change week by week due to the retrospective nature of reporting.

2 Weekly influenza monitoring often uses numbered weeks from 1 to 52 weeks per year. A reference week calendar can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/fluwatch-weeks-calendar.html>

3 Public Health Ontario, Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin 2017-2018

Table 2: Summary of community-based respiratory illness indicators, Middlesex-London, 2017-2018 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Recent Trends
Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness	Nov. 5-11	<p>An average of 7.1% of patients presented with fever and respiratory symptoms.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the pediatric emergency department, where 21.1% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms.</p>	<p>Higher than 6.5% reported the previous week (Oct. 29-Nov. 4).</p> <p>Higher than 19.5% reported the previous week (Oct. 29-Nov. 4).</p>
Absence reports from elementary schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%)	Nov. 6-10	<p>Nine elementary schools from one school board reported average absenteeism (due to all causes) exceeding 10%.</p>	<p>Lower than the previous week (Oct. 30-Nov. 3), when 13 schools reported increased absenteeism.</p>

The Middlesex-London Health Unit gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following community partners who provide data for this report:

London Health Sciences Centre
 St. Joseph's Health Care London
 Thames Valley District School Board