

Weekly Influenza News

Week 49: November 29 to December 5, 2020

Week in Review:

| Influenza Activity Indicator | Assessment of Indicator* | Interpretation |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| <u>Reported cases</u> | Similar | 0 local lab-confirmed cases reported in week 49 ; 0 cases reported in week 48 |
| <u>Percent Positive of Flu Specimens[†]</u> | Similar | Simcoe Muskoka: - flu A: 0.0%; flu B: 0.0% Ontario: - flu A: 0.0%; flu B: 0.2% |
| <u>Local Institutional Outbreaks</u> | Similar | No institutional flu outbreaks declared in week 49 ; none in week 48 |
| <u>Local Emergency Department respiratory visits: week 49</u> | Similar | Percentage of visits is <i>similar</i> compared to previous week and <i>lower</i> compared to the same period in the 2019-20 season |
| Week 49 Overall Assessment November 29 to December 5, 2020 | Similar | Reported Activity Level: No activity 0 cases of Flu A in SMDHU this week 0 cases of Flu B in SMDHU this week |
| <u>Predominant Influenza Strains:</u> N/A | | |

Notes: Reported activity level is based on definitions available [here](#).

*Compared to previous [surveillance week](#)

† Reported for week 48

Technical Notes

Definitions

Percentage positivity: the number of positive flu cases divided by the number of specimens tested at Public Health Ontario Labs

Reported activity level: the level of influenza activity that is reported to Public Health Ontario by Simcoe Muskoka, based on influenza cases and outbreaks. Definitions available [here](#) (page 8)

Surveillance week: The week number corresponding to the week of year, running Sunday to Saturday, inclusive, for reporting influenza activity. January 1 always falls within week 1. A list of the current season's surveillance weeks can be found [here](#) (Appendix B)

Limitations

Timeliness:

The provincial data are from one week previous because that is the most recent data available.

The hospital data, local counts of influenza, and outbreaks are current to date.

The number of cases listed in a given surveillance week may change as more information becomes available

Case-Follow-up and iPHIS Data Entry:

While Public Health Ontario only requires case information as provided by the laboratory report, the health unit investigates outbreak cases, as information is available, in order to provide a more accurate local picture of adverse outcomes and subtyping.

Case Reporting:

Sporadic cases do not accurately describe all cases of influenza as those cases reported are skewed towards individuals more likely to seek medical care and be tested (e.g. young, elderly and immunocompromised).

Additional Resources

Simcoe Muskoka

- [Influenza Fact Sheet](#)
- [Influenza HealthSTATS page](#)

Provincial

- [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Respiratory Pathogen Surveillance Reports](#)
- [Viral Respiratory Mapper](#)

Week 48 Provincial Summary: For the 2020-2021 surveillance season to week 48, 12 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported across Ontario, 1 (8%) of which was reported in week 48. Among cumulative cases, 42% (5/12) were influenza A.

(Source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, Surveillance Week 48, extracted December 8, 2020)

National

- [Public Health Agency of Canada FluWatch](#)

International Resources

- [WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System](#)