This report includes information on influenza-like illness (ILI) activity in Harris County as well as on the state and national level.

Absenteism data are voluntarily reported from school nurses located at area public schools.

Important Notes:

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) is defined as an illness including a fever (temperature of at least 100°F) with a cough OR a sore throat, without another known cause (such as strep throat).

- Influenza/ILI is reported on a voluntary basis and is not a mandatory notifiable condition.

- Similarly, rapid influenza test results are also reported on a voluntary basis.

- Therefore, data presented in this report indicate trends and should not be interpreted as a complete and total picture of influenza activity in Harris County.


Public Health is “what we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy”

- The Future of the Public’s Health in the 21st Century, Institutes of Medicine, 2003

In This Issue

- National and State Influenza Activity

- Harris County School Absenteeism

- Texas Influenza Lab Testing Summary
Statewide

No variant influenza viruses have been identified in Texas during this flu season.

Locally

There have been no influenza-associated pediatric deaths reported in Harris County (excluding the City of Houston) during this flu season.

Nationally

Influenza activity is considered to be at low levels with local spread in the state of Texas for CDC Week 51 (December 20, 2015—December 26, 2015).

Source: https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/2016/

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly
School Reporting

Influenza/ILI reporting is voluntary as it is not a mandatory notifiable condition. Therefore, this report indicates trends and should not be interpreted as a complete and total picture of influenza activity in Harris County.

Daily absenteeism and student/staff ILI numbers are reported from schools in the 18 Harris County Independent School Districts (ISDs). Schools were asked to begin reporting ILI from the beginning of the school year; however, reporting participation generally increases as occurrence of ILI increases.

The 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 influenza seasons did not have a week 53; the week 53 data point for those seasons is an average of weeks 52 and 1.

School holidays:
* Week 47/48 (Thanksgiving)
* Week 52-Week 1 (Winter Break)
* Week 10/11 (Spring Break)
Additional Information

Harris County Public Health
www.hcphtx.org/Services-Programs/Programs/Epidemiology

Texas Department of State Health Services
Influenza Surveillance: http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/influenza/surveillance/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Information for Schools/Childcare Providers: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/index.htm

World Health Organization
Influenza Surveillance: http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/

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