



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY *Messenger* Public Health Laboratory

January 2014

Influenza Virus activity

Seasonal: Public Health Officials are now describing influenza activity in most of California as wide-spread. The San Luis Obispo Public Health laboratory is detecting Influenza A 09pdm H1 in nearly 70% of submitted specimens (nasopharyngeal swab in M4Viral Transport Medium)

Avian H5N1: Canadian health officials confirmed Jan. 8 that a resident from Alberta has died from H5N1 avian flu, the first case of the virus in North America. Canada's Health Minister, Rona Ambrose, said the infected individual had recently traveled to Beijing. The Canadian case also is the first case of H5N1 infection ever imported by a traveler into a country where the virus is not present in poultry. No such H5N1 viruses have been detected in people or in animals in the United States.

Ambrose stressed that Canadians should not be worried about contracting the virus

Avian H7N9: Hong Kong is on high alert after an Indonesian domestic helper contracted the city's first human case of H7N9 avian flu, the city's government says. The 36-year-old maid is in hospital in a critical condition, Ko Wing-man, Hong Kong's secretary for food and health said in a statement. The woman had recently traveled to Shenzhen, the mainland Chinese city nearest to Hong Kong, where she bought, slaughtered and ate a chicken, Ko added. Her close contacts have also been isolated in hospital.

Emerging Infections (Chikungunya Virus)

On December 7, 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported the first local (autochthonous) transmission of chikungunya virus in the Americas. ProMed Digest reported on January 2, 2014 that that the virus has spread to neighboring islands – portending a movement similar to the spread of West Nile virus.

The latest chikungunya case count from the affected Caribbean Islands follows:
Saint Martin - 98 confirmed, 20 probable, and 271 suspect cases; Saint Barthelemy - 7 confirmed, 2 probable and 16 suspect cases; Martinique - 13 confirmed and 5 probable cases; Guadeloupe - one confirmed locally acquired case, one case imported from Saint Martin and one imported (unspecified) case; Guyana - one imported case from Martinique.

Chikungunya virus infection should be considered in patients with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgia, especially those who have recently traveled to the Caribbean. Healthcare providers are encouraged to report suspected chikungunya cases to their state or local health department to facilitate diagnosis and to mitigate the risk of local transmission.

Information regarding **Assembly Bill 168** requirements for clinical laboratories can be found on the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Laboratory website
<http://www.sloPublicHealth.org/Lab>