



SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY *Messenger* Public Health Laboratory

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Influenza Virus activity

Public Health Officials are now describing influenza activity in most of California as plateauing or possibly decreasing. Influenza A H1pdm 2009 is still the predominant circulating strain in California although seasonal A H3 and Influenza type B are also being detected.

As of Sunday February 16, the San Luis Obispo Public Health laboratory will perform Influenza PCR testing on a fee-for-service basis, and strongly recommends such testing for hospitalized patients with influenza-like illness. PCR IS THE ONLY RELIABLE TEST FOR CONFIRMING THE PRESENCE OF THE INFLUENZA VIRUS.

Global Influenza Activity

Influenza A H1 pdm2009 is still the predominant strain detected by public health laboratories in the United States and in many countries throughout the northern hemisphere. However, newly emergent strains that may result in novel influenza A reassortants with the capacity to infect humans with considerable severity remain under close surveillance. Recent findings include:

- Chinese tourist , 67-year old woman, was diagnosed with Influenza A H7N9 in Kuala Lumpur , Malaysia. (ProMED Digest February 12, 2014). This is the first report of a case outside China.
- A new strain of highly pathogenic avian Influenza virus H5N8, has been identified as the cause of numerous infections of poultry in South Korea (ProMed Digest, January 29, 2014)
- Chinese public health officials reported to the World Health Organization seven new cases of H7N9 influenza infection with one death.
- New cases of avian influenza A H5N1 continue to be reported in Indonesia and Vietnam.

Emerging Infections (Chikungunya Virus)

Chikungunya virus infection continues to spread in the Caribbean islands, including Saint Martin/St. Maarten, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Barthélemy and the British Virgin Islands. French Guiana has reported cases associated with Caribbean travel. Patients with acute onset of fever and polyarthralgia, especially those who have recently traveled to the Caribbean, should be evaluated for possible Chikungunya virus infection.