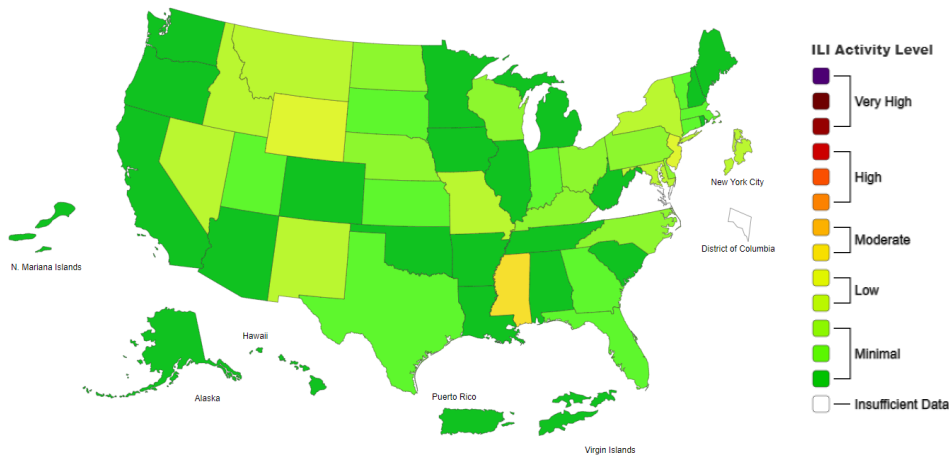


# County of Riverside Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

2021CDC Disease Week 40 (10/3/2021-10/9/2021), Issue 1

Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Some people, such as older people, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk for serious flu complications. According to CDC's Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report, the current influenza and influenza-like illness (ILI) activity level in California was minimal<sup>1</sup> (Figure 1). Riverside County collects ILI data via a variety of sources, including CDC's Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE), Riverside University Health System (RUHS) outpatient services and selected sentinel providers. This report provides a summary of current influenza syndromic surveillance data in Riverside County.

Figure 1. 2020-21 Influenza Season Week 39 Ending Oct 2, 2021



## Key Points at-a-glance

- Minimal ILI activity level in Riverside County
- 2.1% ILI among emergency department visits
- 2.2% ILI among outpatient service visits
- 24 deaths reported due to pneumonia and influenza

## Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance

Emergency department (ED) data were collected via ESSENCE. ILI records were captured based on discharge diagnosis. During week 40, ILI accounted for 2.1% (N=280) of all ED visits in Riverside County (Figure 2), 8 of them (2.9%) were admitted to the hospital after ED visit (Figure 3). Comparing to the previous week, ILI-related ED visits decreased by 0.1% and hospitalization rate after ILI-related ED visit increased by 1.6%. ILI-related ED visits occurred across all age groups (Figure 4). However, after adjustment for age<sup>2</sup>, children aged 0-4 accounted for 65.4% of all ILI-related ED visits (Figure 5).

Figure 2. Percent of ILI-related ED Visits

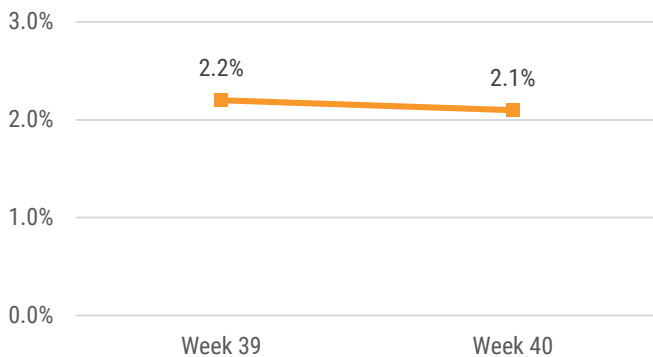
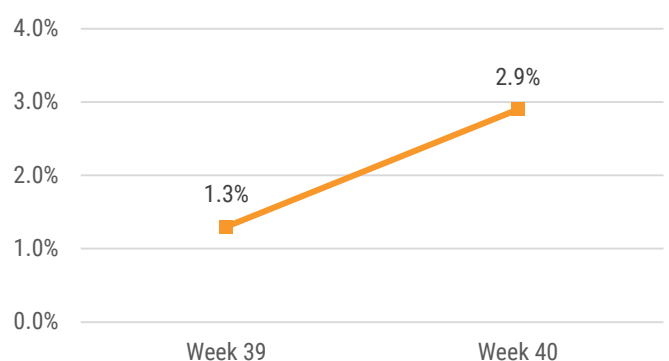


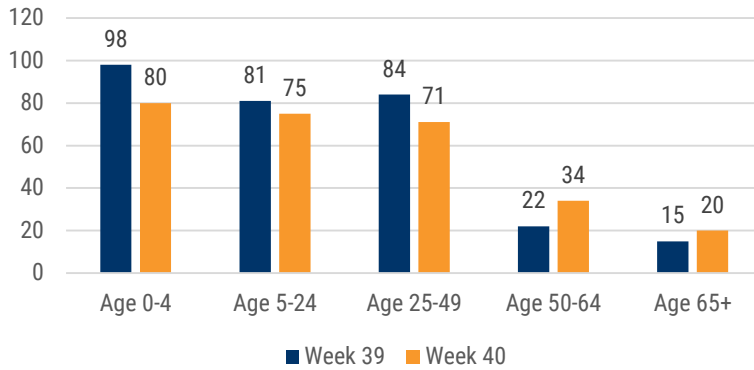
Figure 3. Percent of Hospitalizations after ILI-related ED Visit



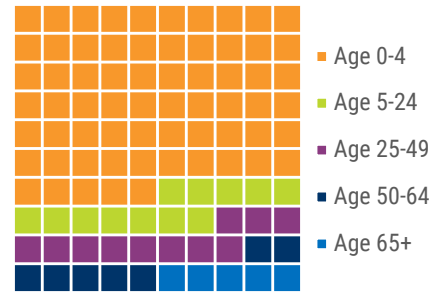
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**Figure 4. ILI-related ED Visits by Age Group**



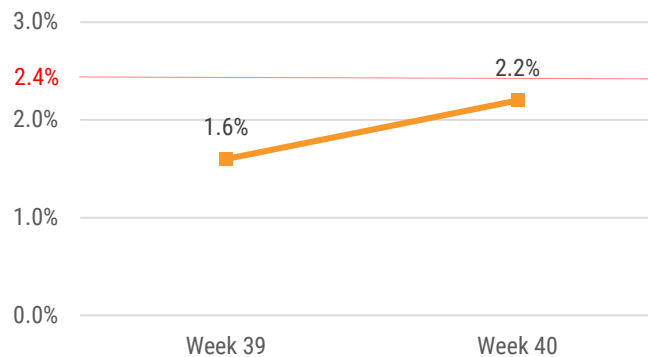
**Figure 5. Age-adjusted Proportion of ILI-related ED Visits by Age Group, Week 39-40**



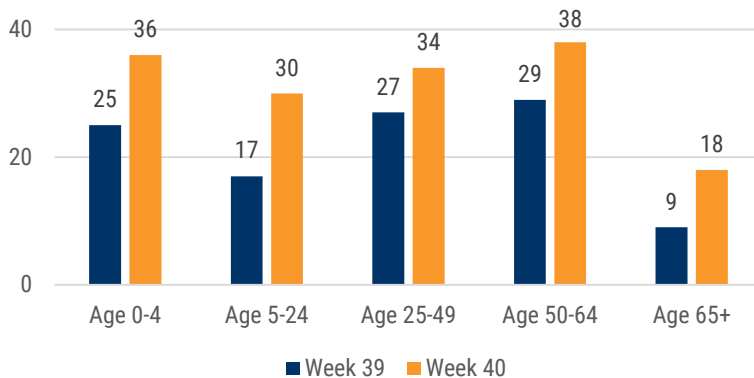
## Outpatient Service Syndromic Surveillance

RUHS reports ILI-related outpatient visits weekly, including any face-to-face, phone and video visits. ILI records were retrieved based on visit diagnosis, which was not laboratory-confirmed. During week 40, the percentage of outpatient visits attributed to ILI was 2.2% (N=156) with an increase of 0.6% than the previous week (Figure 6). The national baseline for 2021-2022 influenza season is 2.5% and the regional baseline for California is 2.4%<sup>3</sup>. Similarly, ILI-related outpatients visits occurred across all age groups (Figure 7). After adjustment for age<sup>2</sup>, children aged 0-4 accounted for 53.0% of all ILI-related outpatient visits (Figure 8).

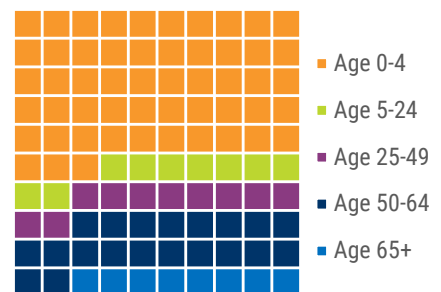
**Figure 6. Percent of ILI-related RUHS Outpatient Visits**



**Figure 7. ILI-related RUHS Outpatient Visits by Age Group**



**Figure 8. Age-adjusted Proportion of ILI-related RUHS Outpatient Visits by Age Group, Week 39-40**



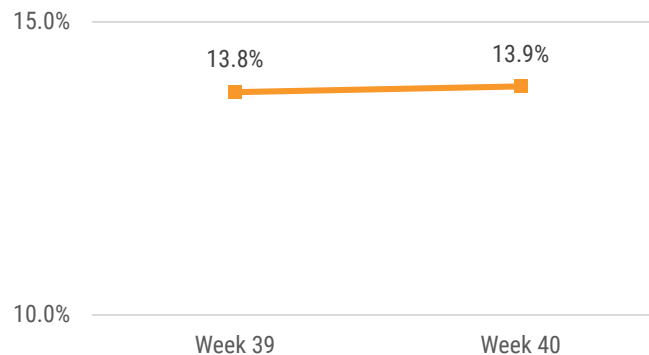
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## Sentinel Site Syndromic Surveillance

Five sentinel sites in Riverside County were selected to facilitate a comprehensive influenza surveillance program. Unfortunately, only the Student Health Services in University of California, Riverside submitted data. During week 40, ILI accounted for 13.9% (N=59) of all sentinel site visits with an increase of 0.1% than the previous week (Figure 9). All of them were aged 5-25. Data from sentinel sites are significantly affected by their served population and the results might not be applicable to the general population.

**Figure 9. Percent of ILI-related Sentinel Site Visits**



## Deaths Registered with Either or Both of Pneumonia and Influenza

Pneumonia and influenza (P&I) are among the leading causes of death in the United States, accounting for over 1.7% of all deaths in 2019. During week 40, 13.7% (N=24) of deaths were due, in part, to P&I in Riverside County (Table 1). P&I deaths in the current week may be undercounted because of the 14-day death certificate processing time. Newly identified P&I deaths will be added to the according week. Overall, people aged 65+ accounted for the majority of P&I deaths in Riverside County and very few P&I deaths happened among young people aged 24 or below (Table 2).

**Table 1. Percent of P&I Deaths in Riverside County**

**Table 2. Percent of P&I Deaths by Age Group in Riverside County**

	Week 38	Week 39	Week 40
P&I Death & Percent	65 (17.5%)	60 (18.4%)	24 (13.7%)

	Age 0-4	Age 5-24	Age 25-49	Age 50-64	Age 65+
P&I Death & Percent	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)	19 (12.8%)	40 (26.8%)	89 (59.7%)

## Public Health Recommendations

The best way to reduce risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated every year. Flu vaccines are designed to protect against the four viruses that will be most common in this flu season and are recommended for everyone 6 months and older. Flu vaccines for 2021-2022 flu season are available now. Measures that help preventing COVID-19, such as social distancing, hand washing, and mask wearing, can also effectively prevent influenza.

1. Weekly US Map: Influenza Summary Update: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/usmap.htm>
2. Standard population for age adjustment was retrieved from 2021 population estimates from California Department of Finance
3. National and regional baseline information for outpatient illness surveillance: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm>
4. ESSENCE and death data were accessed on 10/14/2021; RUHS and sentinel site data were received on 10/12/2021