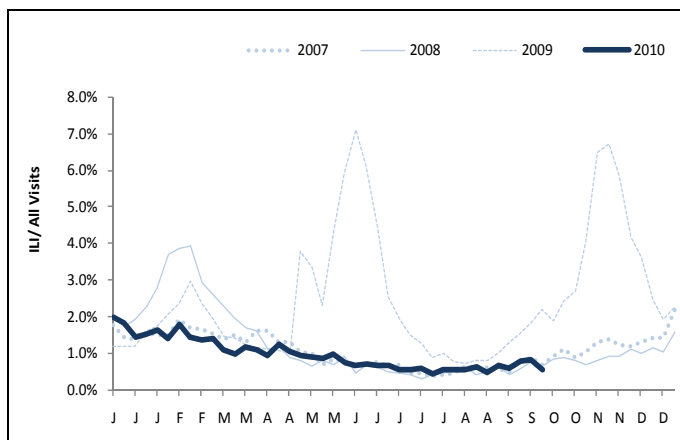




## 2010-11 Influenza Season Update - September 2010

**Summary:** As of 9/25/10, influenza-like activity is at 0.8% of all ED visits in Boston. Activity generally increases starting in autumn months with peak activity between January and March. This season, influenza vaccine is recommended for all persons age 6 months and older. The trivalent influenza vaccine provides protection against an influenza A H1N1 strain, an influenza A H3N2 strain, and an influenza B strain. **BPHC would like to remind all Boston-based healthcare providers that all cases of influenza, confirmed by any rapid or laboratory test, as well as clusters of illness must be reported to BPHC.**



**Figure.** Percent (%) of visits to Boston emergency departments for influenza-like illness, 2007-2010.

### Epidemiology

Current influenza-like illness (ILI) remains at low levels typical for this time of the year. For the week ending 9/25/10, 0.8% of all ED visits were for ILI (0.6% average for the last 10 weeks). Three cases of influenza type A in Boston residents have been reported since July 1, 2010, ranging in age from 5-19 years.

### Diagnosis

Healthcare providers should consider the diagnosis of influenza in persons who present with symptoms including fever, myalgias, headache, malaise, dry cough, and sore throat, not attributable to another etiology. Symptomatic patients should be encouraged to limit contact with others for at least 24 hours after their fever resolves without the use of antipyretic medications. For most people, this will be a minimum of 4 days.

**Prevention** This season, influenza vaccine is recommended for all persons age 6 months and older who do not have a specific contraindication to the vaccine. Good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene are also known to reduce the risk of transmission of many respiratory infections and should be promoted. As always, healthcare workers are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated for influenza to prevent transmission to their patients. Educational fact sheets in multiple languages, guidance for influenza

vaccine among healthcare workers and more general information are available on the BPHC website: [www.bphc.org/cdc](http://www.bphc.org/cdc).

### **Reporting**

City and state regulations require that all diagnostic test confirmed cases of influenza diagnosed in Boston be reported to the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC). Outbreaks of disease in the city regardless of etiology must also be reported to BPHC. In addition, laboratories in Boston are required to report positive influenza test results to BPHC. Reporting forms for health care providers and laboratories can be found at [www.bphc.org/cdc](http://www.bphc.org/cdc). Further information is available by contacting the BPHC Communicable Disease Control Division at 617-534-5611.

### **Additional Resources**

BPHC website: <http://www.bphc.org/flu>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health: <http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/flu/seasonal.htm>

CDC Influenza Surveillance: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>