

August 25 to September 7, 2019 (Weeks 35 & 36)

Overall Summary

- Influenza activity remains at interseasonal levels across the country.
- The majority of regions in Canada are reporting no influenza activity.
- Influenza A continues to be the most common influenza virus circulating in Canada.
- This is the first FluWatch report of the 2019-2020 influenza surveillance season. The next report will be published on September 27, 2019. Weekly reporting of laboratory detections of respiratory viruses continues via our [Respiratory Virus Detections Surveillance System](#).

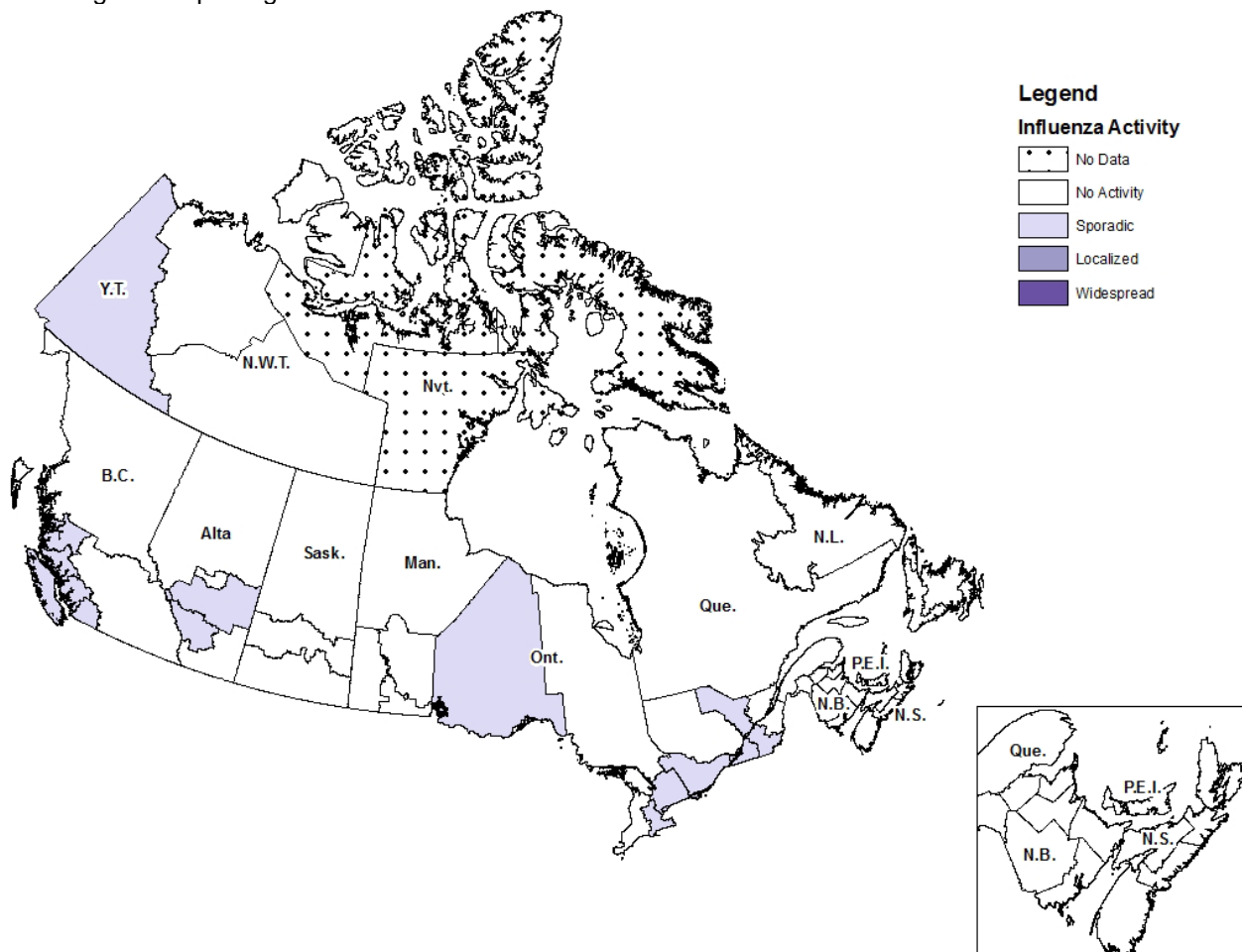
Influenza/Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Activity (geographic spread)

During week 36, the following influenza activity levels were reported (Figure 1):

- 26% of regions reported sporadic activity. The majority (82%) of regions reported the same level of influenza activity in week 36 as reported in the previous FluWatch report (week 34).
- Sporadic activity was reported in regions of YT, BC, AB, ON and QC.

Figure 1 – Map of influenza/ILI activity by province and territory, Canada, week 2019-36

Number of Regions Reporting in Week 36: 50 out of 53



Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza Detections

In weeks 35 and 36, the following results were reported from sentinel laboratories across Canada (Figures 2 and 3):

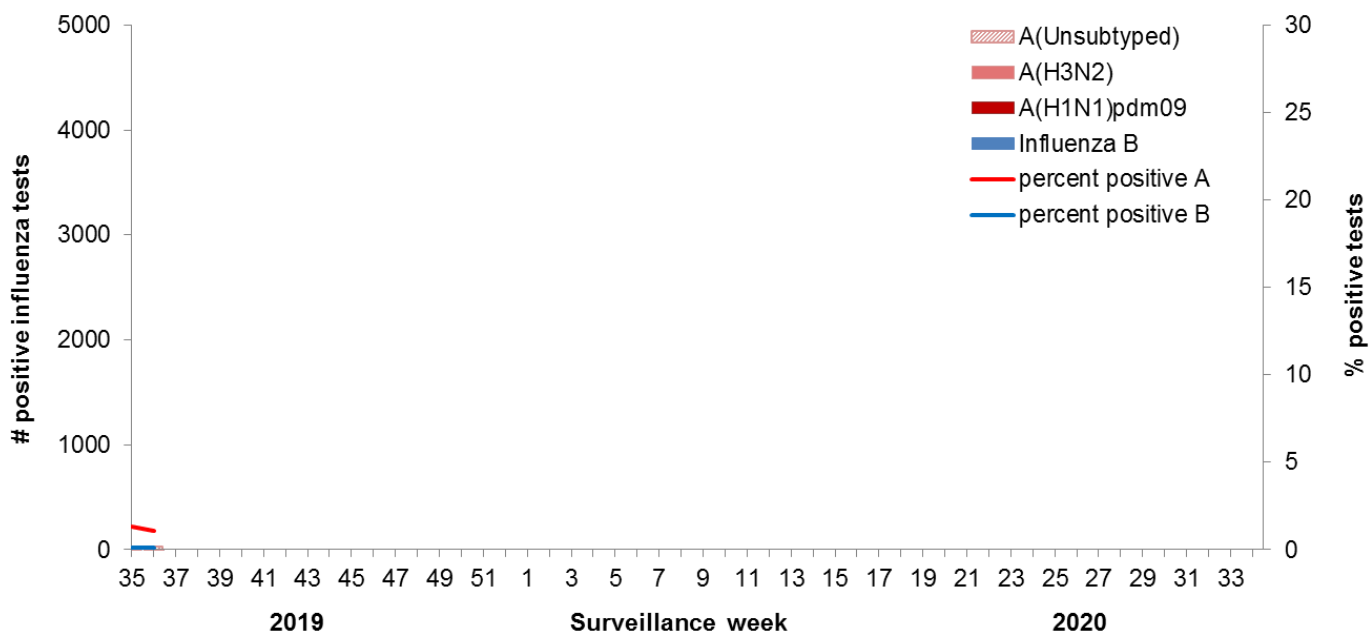
- A total of 54 laboratory detections of influenza were reported, of which 93% (50) were influenza A.
- The percentage of tests positive for influenza was 1.4% in week 35 and 1.2% in week 36. This is similar to the percentage observed since mid-July (weeks 29-34).
- Influenza A(H3N2) accounted for 93% of subtyped influenza A detections during this 2-week period. Over the previous 6 weeks (weeks 29-34) 81% of subtyped influenza A detections were A(H3N2).

In weeks 35 and 36, detailed information on age and type/subtype has been received for 25 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases: 21 influenza A and 4 influenza B.

For more detailed weekly and cumulative influenza data, see the text descriptions for [Figures 2 and 3](#) or the [Respiratory Virus Detections in Canada Report](#).

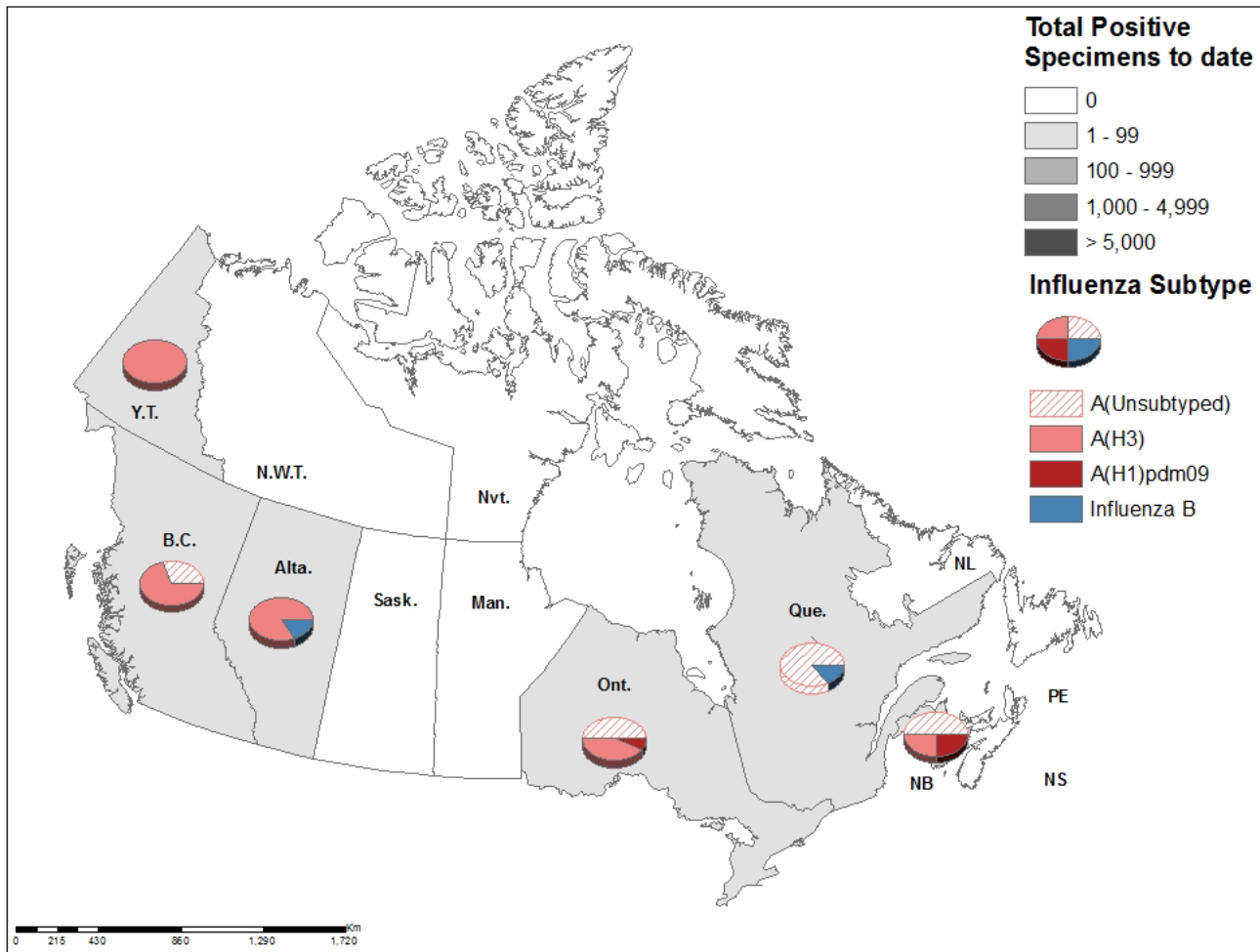
Figure 2 – Number of positive influenza tests and percentage of tests positive, by type, subtype and report week, Canada, weeks 2019-35 to 2019-36

Number of Laboratories Reporting in Week 36: 36 out of 36



For BC, only data from subtyped influenza A specimens are included in the weekly number of influenza detections (bars). Influenza B detections are attributed to the week in which specimens were screened for influenza, and influenza A detections to the week in which they were subtyped. The proportion of screening tests positive for influenza in BC contributes to the national percentage of tests positive.

Figure 3 – Distribution of positive influenza specimens by type/subtype and province/territory*, Canada, weeks 2019-35 to 2019-36



* For BC, only data from subtyped influenza A specimens are included in this figure. The proportion of influenza A detections may be delayed compared to influenza B while subtyping results are pending.

Syndromic / Influenza-like Illness Surveillance

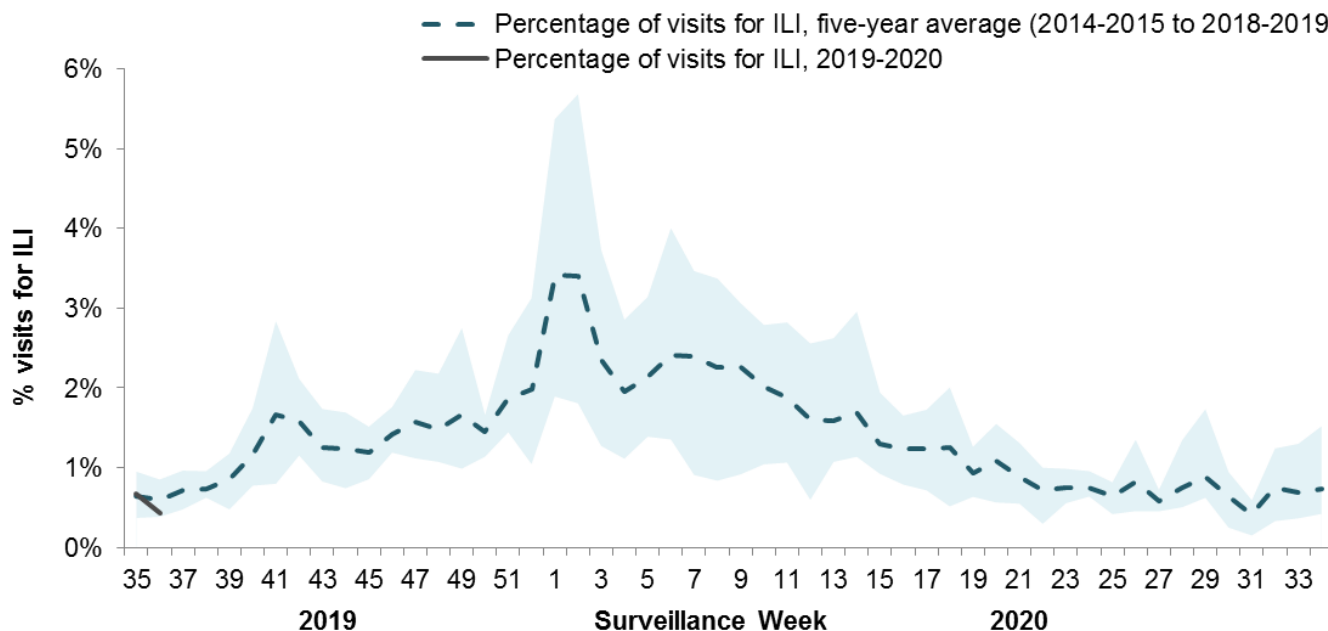
Healthcare Practitioners Sentinel Syndromic Surveillance

In week 35, 0.7% and in week 36, 0.4%, of visits to healthcare professionals were due to influenza-like illness (ILI) (Figure 4).

Figure 4 – Percentage of visits for ILI reported by sentinels by report week, Canada, weeks 2019-35 to 2019-36

Number of Sentinels Reporting in Week 36: 67

Average weekly number of reporting sentinels (2018-19 season): 106



The shaded area represents the maximum and minimum percentage of visits for ILI reported by week from seasons 2014-2015 to 2018-2019

FluWatchers

FluWatchers is a participatory ILI surveillance system that relies on weekly voluntary submissions of syndromic information from Canadians across Canada. [Click here to learn more about the FluWatchers program.](#)

If you are interested in becoming a FluWatcher for this season, [sign up today.](#)

FluWatchers reporting for the 2019-20 season will begin September 29th, 2019 (week 40).

Influenza Outbreak Surveillance

In weeks 35 and 36, no laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreaks nor ILI outbreaks were reported.

Number of provinces and territories reporting in weeks 35 and 36: 12 out of 13

Severe Outcomes Influenza Surveillance

Provincial/Territorial Influenza Hospitalizations and Deaths

In weeks 35 and 36 less than five influenza-associated hospitalizations were reported by participating provinces and territories¹. All cases were associated with influenza A. No ICU admissions or deaths were reported.

Number of provinces and territories reporting in weeks 35 and 36: 9 out of 9

¹Influenza-associated hospitalizations are reported by Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Yukon. Only hospitalizations that require intensive medical care are reported by Saskatchewan.

Pediatric Influenza Hospitalizations and Deaths

In weeks 35 and 36, fewer than five pediatric (≤ 16 years of age) hospitalizations with influenza were reported by the Immunization Monitoring Program Active (IMPACT) network.

Adult Influenza Hospitalizations and Deaths

Surveillance of laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated adult (≥ 16 years of age) hospitalizations by the Canadian Immunization Research Network (CIRN) Serious Outcomes Surveillance (SOS) network has not yet begun for the 2019-20 season.

[Influenza Strain Characterizations](#)

The National Microbiology Laboratory has not yet reported influenza strain characterization results for influenza viruses collected during the 2019-20 season.

[Antiviral Resistance](#)

The National Microbiology Laboratory has not yet reported antiviral resistance results for influenza viruses collected during the 2019-20 season.

[Vaccine Monitoring](#)

Vaccine monitoring refers to activities related to the monitoring of influenza vaccine coverage and effectiveness.

Vaccine Coverage

Influenza vaccine coverage estimates for the 2019-20 season are anticipated to be available in February or March 2020.

Vaccine Effectiveness

Influenza vaccine effectiveness estimates for the 2019-20 season are anticipated to be available in February or March 2020.

Provincial and International Surveillance Links

- British Columbia – [Influenza Surveillance; Vaccine Effectiveness Monitoring](#)
- Alberta – [Influenza surveillance](#)
- Saskatchewan – [Influenza Reports](#)
- Manitoba – [Seasonal Influenza Reports](#)
- Ontario – [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#)
- Québec – [Système de surveillance de la grippe \(available in French only\)](#)
- New Brunswick – [Influenza Surveillance Reports](#)
- Prince Edward Island – [Influenza Summary](#)
- Nova Scotia – [Respiratory Watch Report](#)
- Newfoundland and Labrador – [Surveillance and Disease Reports](#)
- Yukon – [Information on Pandemic, Influenza, Seasonal Flu, Avian Flu and H1N1](#)
- Northwest Territories – [Influenza/ Flu Information](#)
- Nunavut – [Influenza Information](#)
- World Health Organization – [FluNet \(Global Influenza Surveillance Network\)](#)
- Pan American Health Organization – [Influenza situation report](#)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Prevention & Control (CDC) - [Weekly Influenza Summary Update](#)
- ECDC – [Surveillance reports and disease data on seasonal influenza](#)
- United Kingdom – [Weekly Influenza Activity Reports](#)
- Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection - [Flu Express](#)
- Australia – [Influenza Surveillance Report and Activity Updates](#)
- New Zealand – [Influenza Weekly Update](#)

Notes

The data in the FluWatch report represent surveillance data available at the time of writing. All data are preliminary and may change as more reports are received.

To learn more about the FluWatch program, see the [Overview of influenza monitoring in Canada](#) page.

For more information on the flu, see our [Flu \(influenza\)](#) web page.

We would like to thank all the Fluwatch surveillance partners participating in this year's influenza surveillance program.

This [report](#) is available on the Government of Canada Influenza webpage.

Ce [rapport](#) est disponible dans les deux langues officielles.