

Factsheet on Local Influenza Situation

1. Indications of the rise in influenza activity

a. Number of Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI) attendances in polyclinics

In the week of 2 – 8 May, the ARI attendances in the polyclinics was 17,699 (daily average of 3,219 over 5.5 working days), compared to 16,167 in the previous week between 25 April and 1 May 2010 (daily average of 3,233 over 5.0 working days)

b. Percentage of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) among ARI attendances in polyclinics

The proportion of ILI attendances among ARI polyclinic attendances in the week of 2 – 8 May was 5%, up from 3% the previous week. It had been mostly in the range of 2% to 3% since early November 09.

2. Cumulative number of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) cases per week

The estimated cumulative number of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) as of 8 May 2010 was 519,000, assuming all sought medical treatment and all are symptomatic.

3. Cumulative number of severely ill cases and deaths, distributed by age-group

As of 2 May 2010, there were 129 severely ill cases including 25 deaths related to Influenza A (H1N1-2009).

Age group of 129 severely ill cases including 25 deaths related to Influenza A (H1N1-2009)

Age group (years)	Number	Percentage (%)
Below 1	2	1.6
1 - 9	17	13.2
10 - 19	7	5.4
20 - 29	19	14.7
30 - 39	11	8.5
40 - 49	21	16.3
50 - 59	28	21.7
60 - 69	14	10.9
70 and older	10	7.8
All	129	100.0

Age group of 25 deaths related to Influenza A (H1N1-2009)

Age group (years)	Number	Percentage (%)
Below 1	0	0.0
1 - 9	3	12.0
10 - 19	1	4.0
20 - 29	1	4.0
30 - 39	2	8.0
40 - 49	7	28.0
50 - 59	5	20.0
60 - 69	1	4.0
70 and older	5	20.0
All	25	100.0

4. Part of seasonal flu trend

Influenza A (H1N1-2009) is currently still the predominant circulating flu strain. Based on our influenza surveillance and hospital statistics, we have thus far not noted any discernable upward trend in the number or proportion of severely ill cases, or any significant mutation in the Influenza A (H1N1-2009) virus. An increase in influenza activity is usually observed in January/February and May/June in Singapore every year. The recent increase in influenza trend could be likely a part of the fluctuating seasonal trends. Our Influenza A (H1N1) flu alert status remains green.

MOH experts will continue to actively monitor the flu situation locally and around the world. As part of our continued vigilance and good patient care, we would advise individuals to observe personal hygiene and exercise social responsibility. Our hospitals will also continue to institute appropriate infection control measures, such as visitor restriction, to prevent cross infection in hospitals and ensure that patients get the necessary rest.

5. Importance of vaccination

H1N1 continues to circulate locally and globally as the main influenza virus strain in most areas. While most people with H1N1 recover with rest and symptomatic treatment, H1N1 can result in hospitalisation or even death, especially in those with underlying medical problems such as asthma, diabetes, gross obesity, low immunity or in those who are pregnant.

Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent influenza infection. Effective vaccines against H1N1 are available and vaccination is recommended especially for persons who have existing conditions which put them at higher risk of developing complications.

6. Other preventive measures

Practise good personal hygiene and be socially responsible by:

- a. Washing your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water, especially before touching your eyes, nose or mouth;
- b. Turning quickly away from anyone near you if you are about to cough or sneeze, and do not cough or sneeze at him;
- c. Covering your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of the tissue properly in the dustbin after use;
- d. Avoiding crowded places if you are unwell and wear a surgical mask to cover your nose and mouth;
- e. Staying home from work or school when you are sick; and
- f. Using a serving spoon when sharing food at meal times.

In addition, leading a healthy lifestyle helps to build up your immunity and protects you against infection.

- a. Eat a balanced diet, including plenty of fruit and vegetables.
- b. Be active. Do 30 minutes of physical activity at least 5 days a week.
- c. Learn to relax and have enough sleep and rest.