

Influenza H1N1 pdm9 is the main strain seen this year in Louisiana

This year it is not more and not less severe than in 2009.

Influenza can be a severe disease. The vaccine will help prevent complications and deaths

Many are concerned about the severity of influenza this season in comparison with the previous years. The virus in circulation now is identical to the H1N1 pandemic strain from 2009 (now named H1N1pdm9).

It is interesting to look at the statistics from the 2009 pandemic influenza season in Louisiana:

-From October 4 to December 31st 2009,

- the number of influenza cases was estimated at 85,000 cases,
- there were 187 hospitalizations for influenza confirmed by PCR
- and 26 deaths among these 187 hospitalizations.

-For the entire season,

there were about 300,000 cases, with 2,409 cases for which there was PCR confirmation by the LA Public Health Laboratory.

- there were 736 hospitalized patients confirmed with H1N1pdm9
- among these 736, 205 were in ICU, this represent 28% of the patients hospitalized,
- among these 736, 125 were on ventilators, this represent 17% of the patients hospitalized,
- among these 736, there were 50 deaths, this represents 7% of the patients hospitalized.
- Of these 50 deaths, 48 deaths occurred in ICU patients.
- the hospitalization affected proportionally more of the middle age groups as shown in the following table:

Age Group	Proportion of the population in this age group	Proportion of the hospitalization in this age group	Ratio of these proportions
00_04	7%	15%	$15/7 = 2.1$
05_24	30%	34%	$34/30 = 1.1$
25_49	34%	28%	$28/34 = 0.8$
50_64	17%	17%	$17/17 = 1.0$
65P	12%	5%	$5/12 = 0.4$

A ratio of 1.0 shows that the distribution of hospitalized was similar as the distribution of the population, meaning there was no excess and no deficit in hospitalization. The ratios of these proportions shows there was an excess distribution among the children and a deficit among the elderly. Maybe the elderly were somehow protected by some remnant of old antibody against a similar strain from the past.

The age group distribution of these patients hospitalized was the following:

Age Group	Hospitalized	In ICU	% in ICU	Death	% Death
00_04	111	15	13.5%	0	0.0%
05_24	252	45	17.8%	14	5.5%
25_49	206	78	37.8%	18	8.7%
50_64	128	49	38.3%	15	11.7%
65P	39	18	46.1%	3	7.7%