

# Public Health Points

York City Bureau of Health

Volume 29, Issue 3

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September 2013

[www.yorkcity.org](http://www.yorkcity.org)

## 2013/2014 Influenza Season

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) monitors influenza activity throughout the year. A typical influenza surveillance season runs from the beginning of October to September of the following year. For the upcoming season (2013/2014 season), the influenza surveillance season will run from October 2, 2013 through September 30, 2014.

During that period, the PADOH will monitor influenza activity on a daily basis and post weekly flu updates every Tuesday. These updates will provide a summary on:

1. The proportion of outpatient doctor visits attributable to influenza-like illnesses (ILI);
2. How much influenza is circulating at any given time;
3. When and where influenza activity is occurring;
4. What types of influenza viruses are circulating;
5. Changes in circulating influenza viruses that may confer antiviral resistance, indicate emergence of new strains, or reduce the effectiveness of influenza vaccines;
6. The impact influenza is having on hospitalizations and deaths in the commonwealth; and
7. Important information regarding influenza prevention and control guidance.

Updates for the 2013/2014 season will be posted mid-October 2013.

It is important to note that PADOH flu numbers only consist of positive lab confirmed cases reported to the PADOH and are only a fraction of the actual burden of illness occurring in the commonwealth at any given time. This is because most persons with the flu (even those who seek healthcare) are diagnosed presumptively and do not have lab tests performed to determine the cause of illness, and some people do not go to the doctors when they are ill.

Influenza is highly unpredictable in terms of incidence and severity from year-to-year. It is estimated that 600,000 to 1,200,000 Pennsylvanians get the flu each year and 200 to 2,000 die from complications from the flu. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prepare for the influenza season. Most flu vaccination sites have already received their vaccine supplies and have begun administering the vaccine.

Up-to-date information about the influenza season is available from the PADOH at [www.flufreepa.com](http://www.flufreepa.com) and from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

## Matter of Balance, A Fall Prevention Program, Available to Seniors

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. A MATTER OF BALANCE is a FREE award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels. If your agency or organization is interested in hosting a Matter of Balance class please contact Aerielle Waters, York City Health Bureau, Community Health Specialist, at 717-846-6730 or [awaters@yorkcity.org](mailto:awaters@yorkcity.org).

Reportable Conditions – 2013 City of York, Pa		
Reported Cases	Aug.	Total
Animal Bites	11	74
Campylobacter Enteritis	0	2
Chlamydia	35	351
Cryptosporidiosis	0	2
Gonorrhea	18	131
Hepatitis A	0	1
Hepatitis B	1	2
Hepatitis C	8	61
Histoplasmosis	0	1
HIV Infection	1	15
Influenza, Type A	0	33
Influenza, Type B	0	17
Influenza, Not Specified	0	1
Invasive Group A Beta-Strep Disease	0	1
Lead Poisoning	2	15
Lyme Disease	1	3
Meningitis – Bacterial	0	1
Meningitis – Fungal	0	1
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection	0	41
Salmonellosis	0	3
<b>Total Case Reports</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>756</b>

## **October 1<sup>st</sup> and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)**

Beginning October 1, 2013, the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Marketplaces are open for potential consumers to gather information, compare health insurance plans, and enroll in their plan of choice. For those who enroll, health insurance coverage will begin as early as January 1, 2014.

Many states across the nation have developed their own Health Care Marketplace for the residents in their states; these are called state-run Marketplaces. In states that have not created their own state-run Marketplace, there will be only the federal-run Marketplace. Here in Pennsylvania the state government has decided not to set up its own Marketplace. Hence, Pennsylvanians who desire to purchase health insurance in order to comply with the ACA must sign up under the federal-run Marketplace.

The Health Insurance Marketplace can help you find the best health insurance plan for your needs and budget. All plans in the Marketplace are required to offer comprehensive coverage or essential health benefits. In addition, one will be able to compare available options, prices and plans by filling out just one application. Some applicants may find they may qualify for free or low-cost health care, such as Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). All health insurance plans in the Marketplace are offered by private companies.

**Get started now!** Pennsylvanians needing health insurance should visit <https://www.HealthCare.gov> to set up an account and explore enrollment options. Assistance is available in more than 150 languages 24/7 toll-free at **1-800-318-2596**.

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