

Travis County Influenza Surveillance

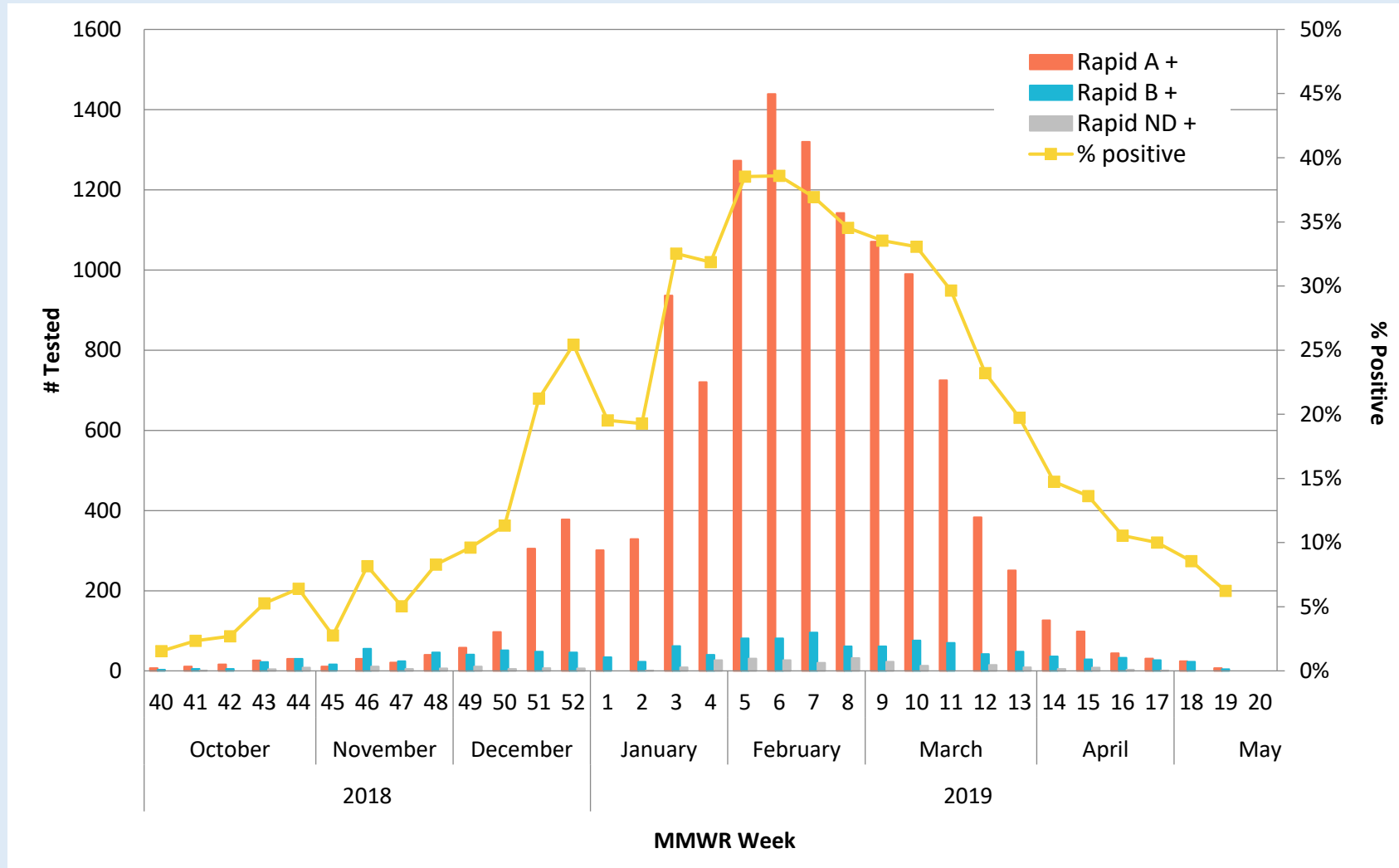


Summary – Season 2018-2019 (as of May 17, 2019).

- Influenza activity is low in Travis County.
- The percentage of specimens positive by rapid antigen tests for influenza reported by hospitals and public health laboratories in Travis County is 6.3% (as of MMWR week 19).
- No influenza outbreaks were reported during MMWR week 19.
- Ten influenza-associated deaths have been reported among Travis County residents during this season (one person died in November 2018, three persons died in January, one person died in February, two persons died in March, and three persons died in April 2019). No influenza associated pediatric deaths have been reported.
- As of MMWR week 19, the percentage of specimens positive for influenza reported by hospital laboratories across Texas was 5.8%, statewide the number of patient visits due to Influenza like Illness (ILI) was 2.5% (Fig. 2).
- In Texas, influenza activity is low. The influenza season appears to have peaked in mid-February. In addition to flu, other respiratory viruses—especially rhinovirus/enterovirus—were detected in Texas during week 19.
- According to CDC, this has been the longest flu season in a decade. However, prompt antiviral treatment for people who are very sick or at high risk of developing serious flu complications is recommended. While influenza A(H1N1) viruses predominated from October to mid-February, influenza A(H3N2) viruses have been more commonly identified since late February. Small numbers of influenza B viruses also have been reported.
- In the U.S., during week 19, the proportion of people seeing their health care provider for ILI was 1.5%, which is below the national baseline of 2.2%. All regions reported ILI below their region-specific baseline level.
- The 2018-2019 flu season has been less severe than last season, however, CDC still estimates that more than 500,000 people were hospitalized from flu.
- Flu shots are available at Shots for Tots/Big Shots clinics for children who are uninsured or Medicaid recipients, and for uninsured adults. Cost of the flu vaccine is \$25 for adults, \$10 for children, and free for children with Medicaid. No one will be denied services if they are unable to pay. Appointments are needed at a clinic, please call 512-972-5520.
- Providers interested in becoming sentinel providers may call the Austin Public Health - Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit at (512) 972-5555.

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Figure 1. Number Tested and Percent Positive Rapid Influenza tests in Travis County by week, 2018-2019 Influenza Season*

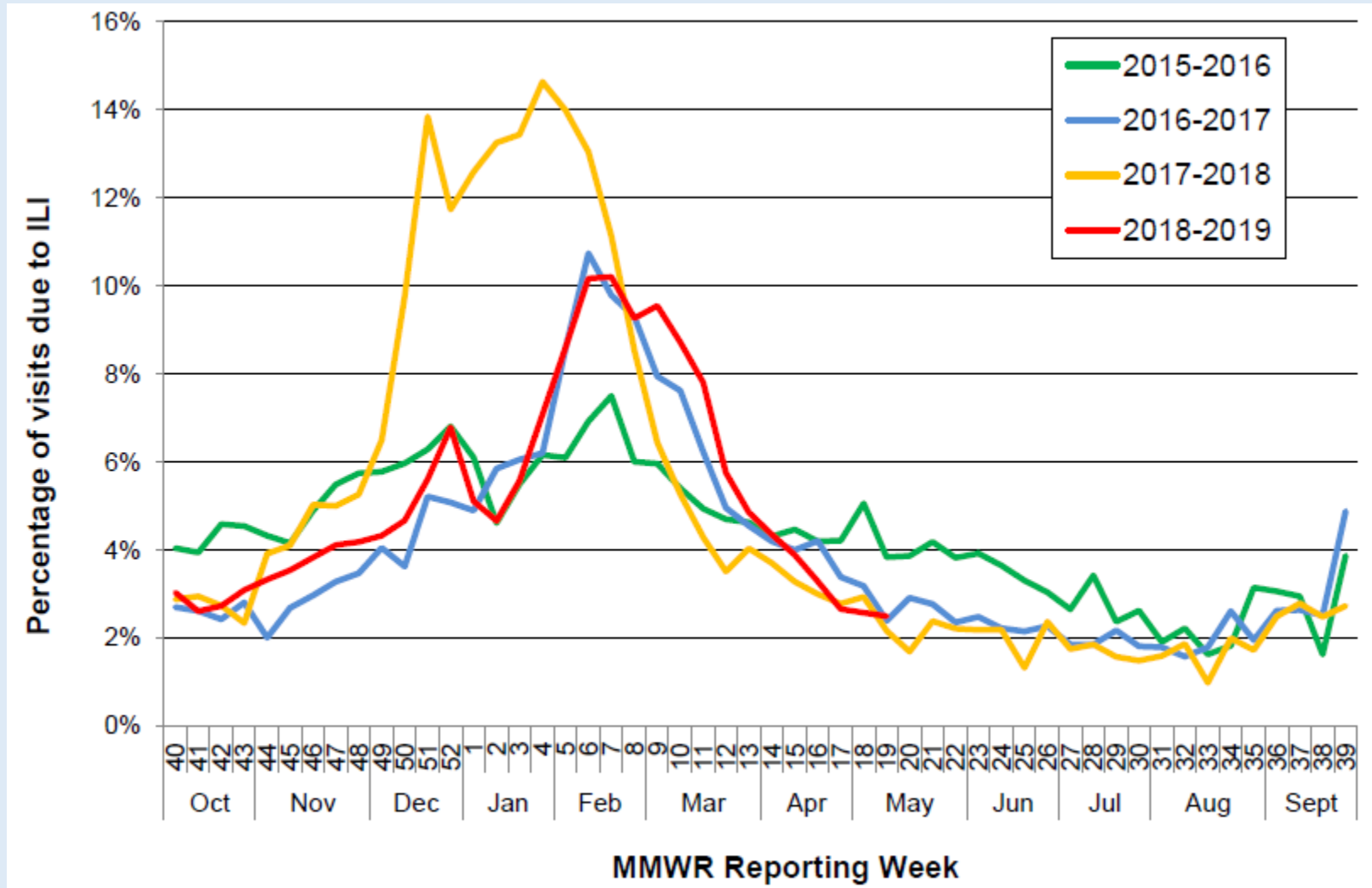


*Data source: Austin/Travis County Influenza surveillance reporters (St. David's, Seton, Austin Regional Clinic, AISD, PISD, MISD, CommunityCare)
Some providers stop reporting by MMWR 18.

Austin/Travis County influenza surveillance does not attempt to capture all cases of influenza or influenza-like illness. These data should be used for trending purposes over time and for identifying types/strains of influenza that are occurring in the Austin area rather than for estimating the total number of cases.

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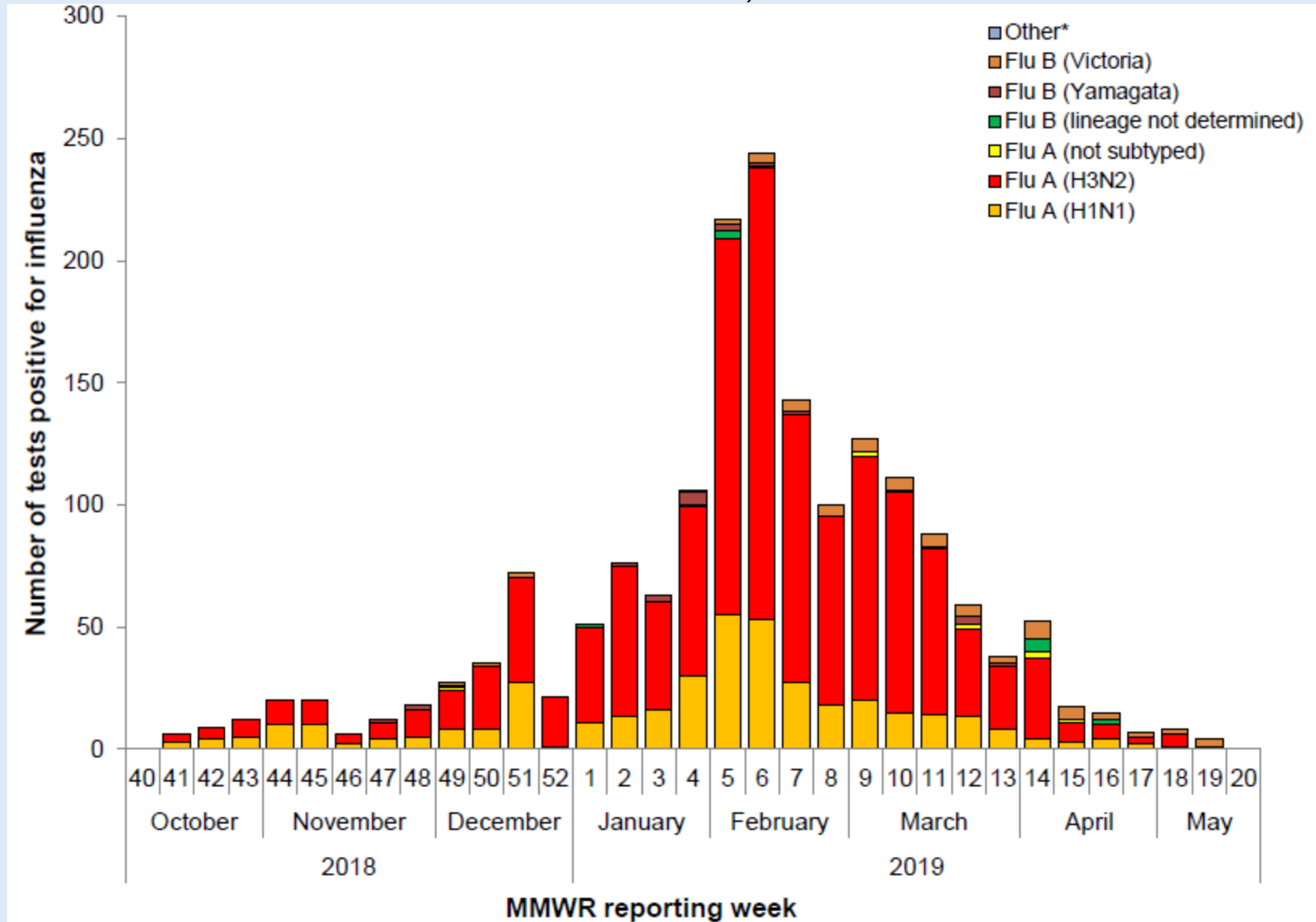
Figure 2: Percentage of Visits Due to Influenza-like Illness Reported by Texas ILINet Participants, 2015–2019 Seasons



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Figure 3: Number and Percentage of Tests (Antigen, Culture, PCR) Positive for Influenza by Type and Subtype Reported by Texas Public Health Laboratories, 2018-2019 Season



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For additional information about Influenza surveillance, contact:

The Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Epidemiology and Health Statistics Unit at (512) 972-5555.

Other Helpful Resources:

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) <http://www.texasflu.org/>

World Health Organization (WHO) <http://www.who.int/influenza/en/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

Flu in Austin <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/flu-austin-influenza>