

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11/27/2019**

TO: Grant County healthcare providers, infection control staff, supervisory nursing staff, clinic management, school nurses.

Grant County Emergency Management

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT**

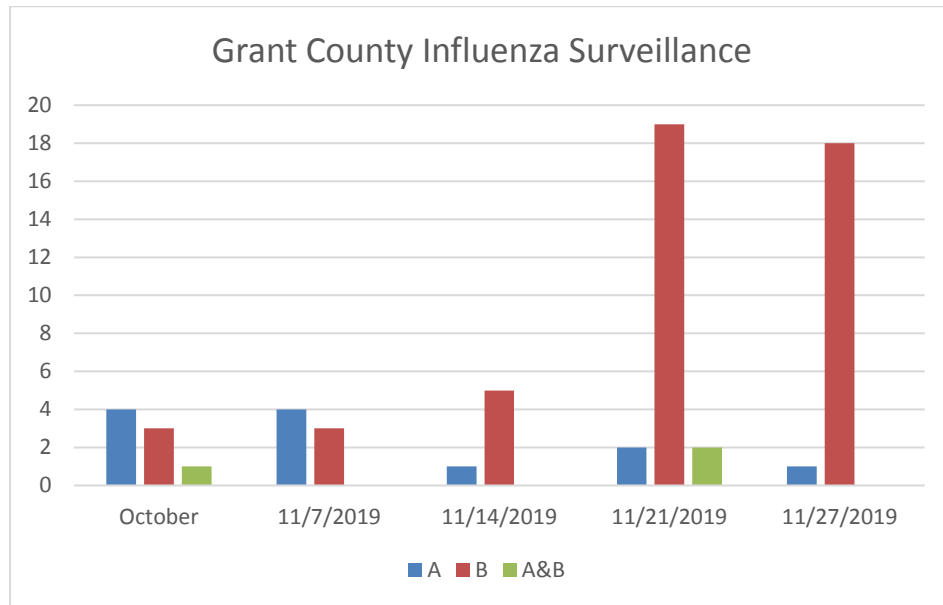
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509-766-7960 x 25

**Influenza Season Arrives in Grant County.**

**GCHD has received multiple reports of positive rapid tests for influenza A and influenza B**

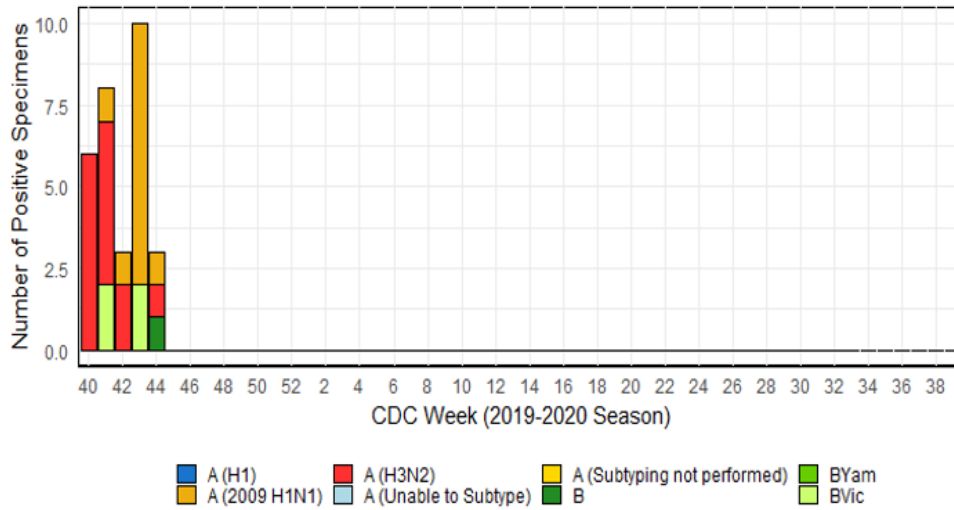
**The Grant County Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Brzezny, has issued the following alert to the Grant County healthcare community and media: the influenza season has arrived in Grant County.** Be aware of increasing influenza and influenza like illness, (ILI) in Grant County and Washington State. **All healthcare facilities should enforce their policies regarding healthcare worker’s influenza vaccinations and masking.**

GCHD is receiving an increased number of reports of influenza A cases and influenza B cases causing a rise above our baseline. Washington state has had 1 lab-confirmed influenza death that has been reported thus far in the 2019-2020 season. No confirmed deaths have occurred in Grant County.



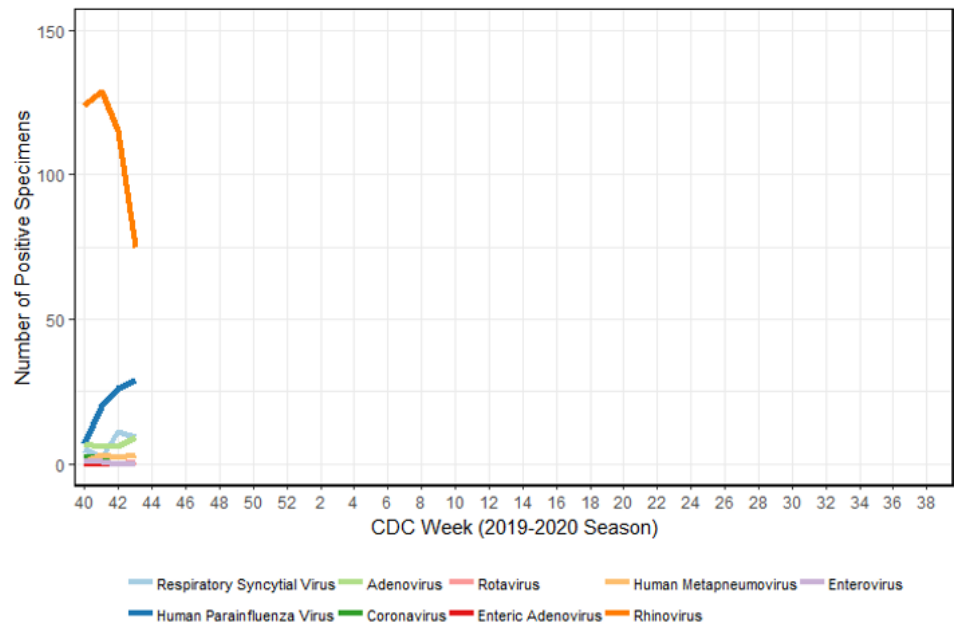
Please refer to the graph below for the strains identified by the CDC for the current influenza season:

**Figure 1: Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC, WA Public Health Laboratories**



**If it is not influenza, what is it?** Be aware of other respiratory viruses currently circulating in WA state.

**Figure 10: Respiratory and Enteric Viruses, Washington, 2019-2020 Season to Date**



3 long term facilities (LTC) in Washington state have experience influenza outbreak. Please be vigilant when assessing LTC residents with ILI and focus on early testing and early treatment.

Long term care facilities are required to report all suspected and confirmed outbreaks to their local health jurisdiction per Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-101-305. Long-term care facilities are required to report the following:

- A sudden increase in acute febrile respiratory illness over the normal background rate (e.g., 2 or more cases of acute respiratory illness occurring within 72 hours of each other) OR
- Any resident who tests positive for influenza.

GCHD urges all residents **6 months and older to get their flu shot as soon as possible**. Flu activity typically increases in the winter months when people spend more time indoors around each other. People who haven't been vaccinated against the flu still have time to get the vaccine before the season reaches its peak. [Recommendations for Prevention & Control of Influenza Outbreaks in Long Term Care Facilities](#) | WA-DOH

[CDC interim guidance for influenza outbreak management in LTCFs](#) | CDC

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-100-FluUpdate.pdf> | WA-DOH weekly update

### **Consultation**

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