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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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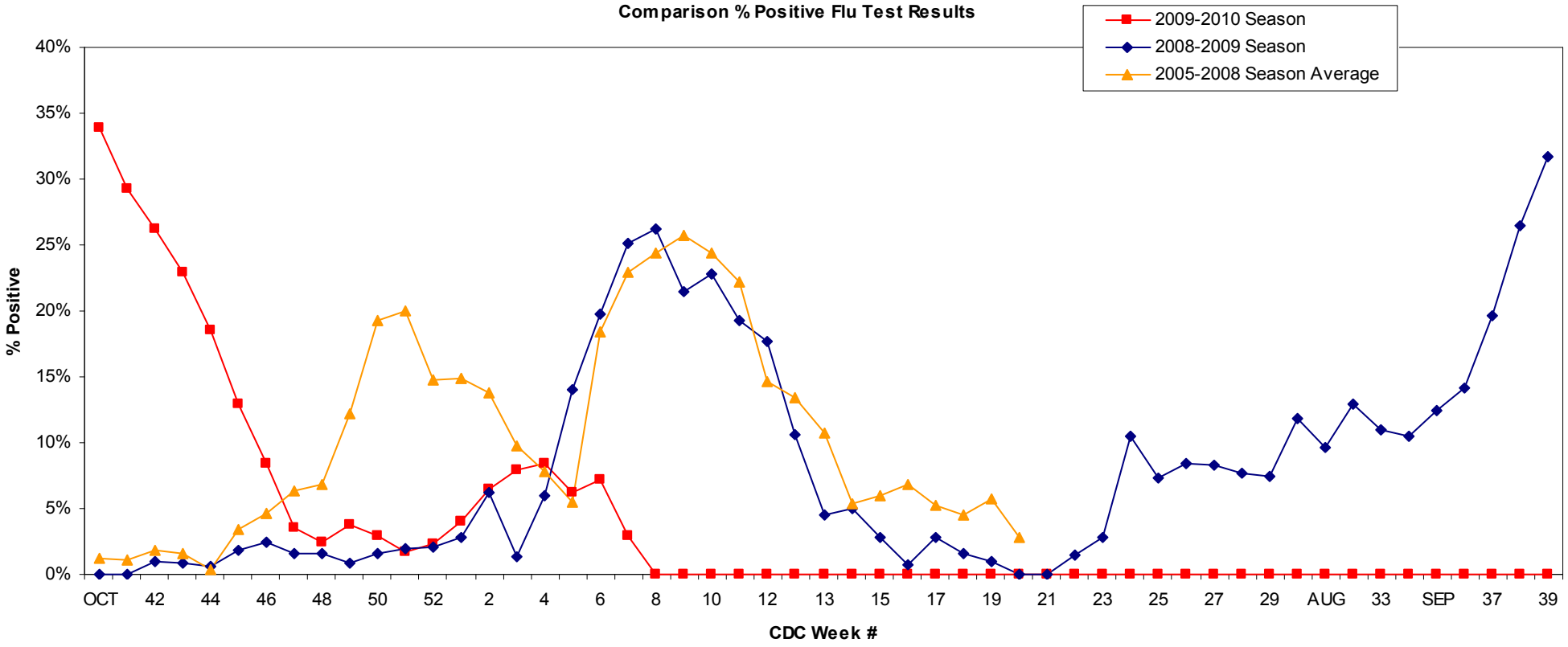
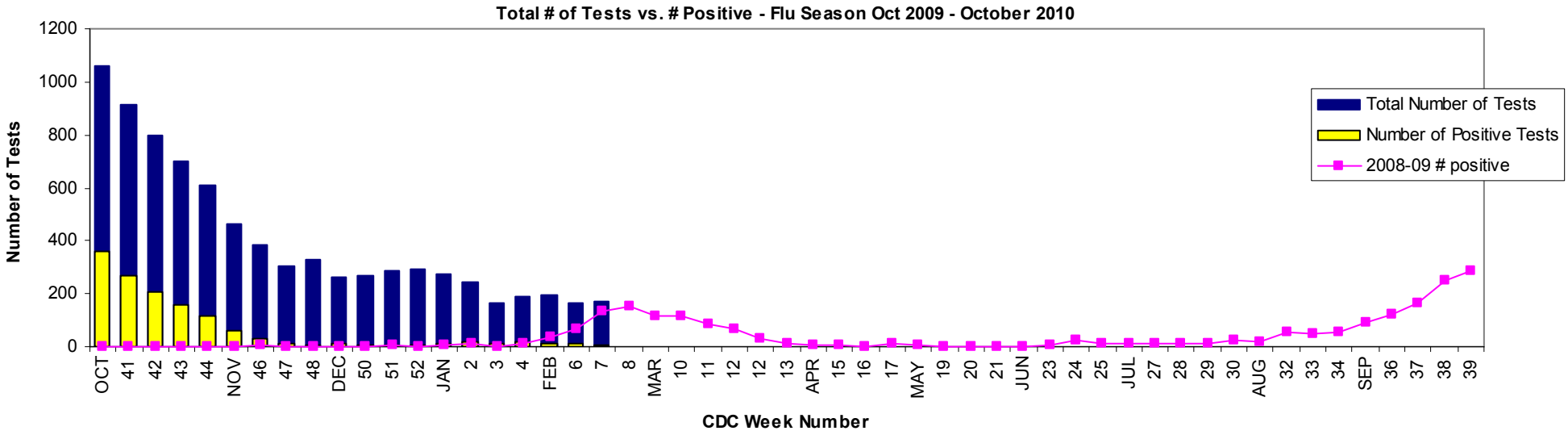
Update: Weekly Respiratory Illness Report – Santa Rosa County, 09-10
CDC 7: February 14-20, 2010

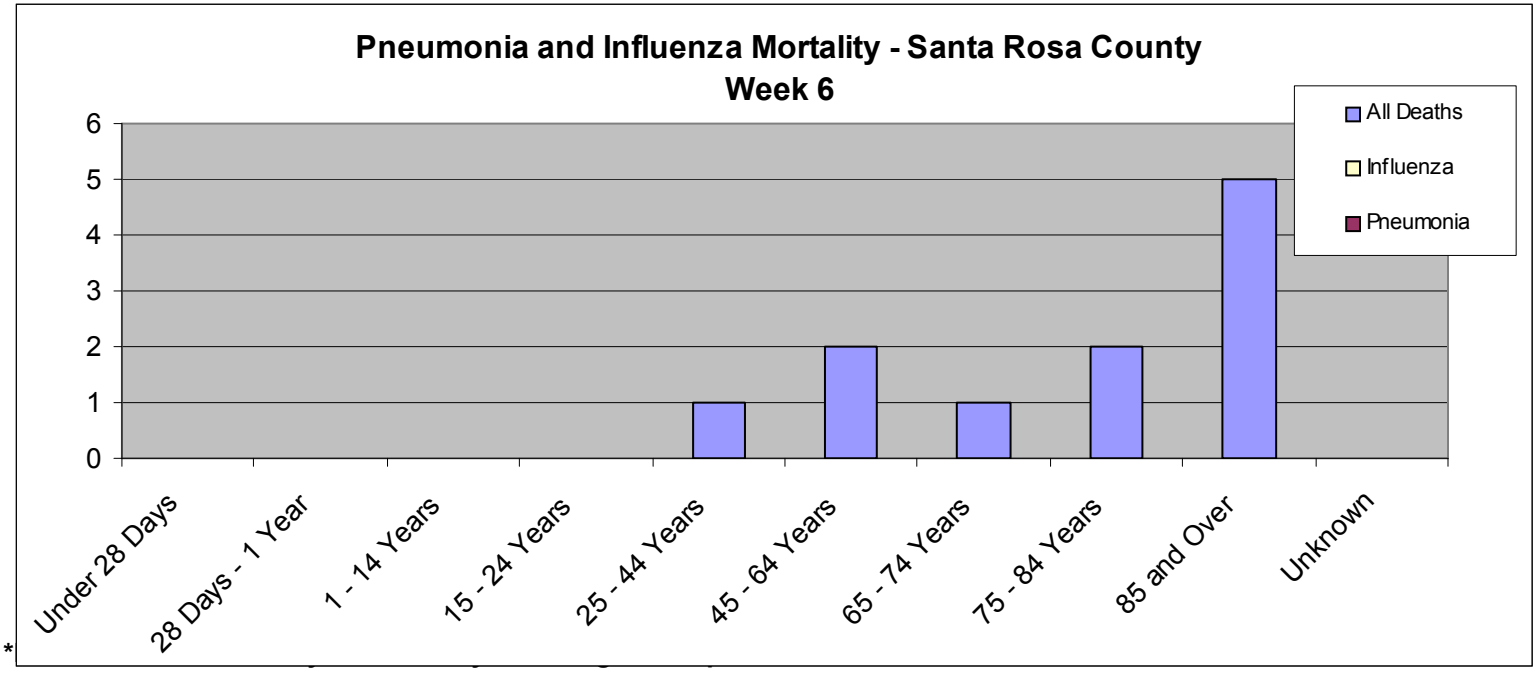
Summary
This report summarizes influenza activity in Santa Rosa County as reported by participating laboratories during the week of February 14-20, 2010. This week, four hospital laboratories reported their weekly numbers and percentages of positive rapid flu tests. Week 7 is the twentieth week in the 2009-2010 flu season and shows a decrease in ILI activity.

Laboratory Surveillance
Hospitals in Santa Rosa County routinely use either rapid antigen tests or PCR testing to diagnose and differentiate influenza A and B in clinical specimens. The hospital laboratories reporting this week use rapid antigen testing. We had 5 positive tests reported out of 170 tests performed during Week 7 (2.94% positive) which is a significant decrease from the previous week. Out of 5 positive tests reported, all 5 were Influenza A.





Santa Rosa County Pneumonia and Influenza Mortality for Week 7, ending February 20, 2010



Week 7	
Total deaths	11
Pneumonia deaths	0
Influenza deaths	0

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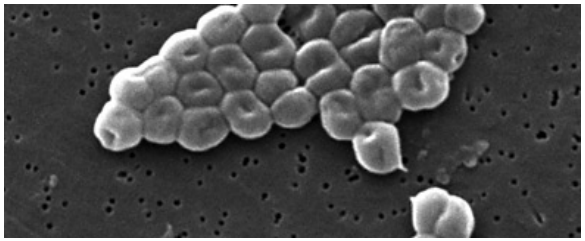
Influenza Opens Door for Superbug Infections: Flu & MRSA Make Deadly Combination

By Dan Childs, *ABC News Medical Unit*



One is a viral illness responsible for an estimated 35,000 deaths every year. The other is a potentially deadly superbug, a horrifying legacy of antibiotic overuse that is now resistant to almost every treatment today's doctors can throw at it.

Even on their own, infection with either influenza or methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) can lead to a grave situation. But now, health officials are keeping an eye out for an even more harrowing threat -- simultaneous infection with both diseases. And they say that, in children at least, these cases of co-incident infection appear to be on the rise.

So far, what the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has learned about the potential link between flu and MRSA in young patients is disturbing. According to an official health advisory issued Jan. 30, between Oct. 1, 2006, and Sept. 30, 2007, the agency received a total of 73 reports of child deaths due to influenza. In 22 of these cases, the children were also infected with some form of the staph bug, mostly MRSA.

This compares with only three such cases of co-infection during the same period in 2005 and 2006, and just one such case identified in 2004-2005.

It is not the first time that viral and bacterial infections have gone hand-in-hand, but when it does happen, the results can be disastrous. Infectious disease experts say spikes in this kind of co-incidence of influenza and drug-resistant bugs have happened in the past, with devastating results even for many healthy individuals.

MRSA remains the single most common source of hospital infections

Contracting both the flu and MRSA at the same time is far more than simple coincidence, scientists believe. Rather, they suspect that the damage inflicted on the lungs and airways by the flu virus allows MRSA germs to sneak into vulnerable tissues and gain a foothold.

The timing of concerns over the links between flu and MRSA come at a time when pandemic fears are growing and reports of non-hospital superbug infections are on the rise.

The key to heading off the dangerous partnership between influenza and MRSA is to go on the attack against the flu with increased vaccination rates.
It is a task that is easier said than done. Only about one-third of children actually receive the flu vaccine during a given season. Part of the reason behind this low turnout could be the number of groups that actively discourage parents from having their children vaccinated against the flu. These groups claim that these vaccines -- primarily, the forms of the vaccine that contain thimerosal -- are a primary cause of autism in children. This claim lacks any scientific proof.

"If you prevent the initial influenza infection, you also prevent the dire complication of MRSA pneumonia. Thus, vaccinating all children against influenza is a public health program with a double benefit -- what could be better than that?" says Dr. William Schaffner, professor and chairman of preventive medicine at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

Surveillance for CDC in Santa Rosa County from onset of 2009 H1N1 Influenza A

Hospitalized w Life-threatening H1N1 Influenza A	Hospitalized Pregnant Women w H1N1 Influenza A	H1N1 Influenza A Deaths
4	1	2