In the past week, a total of 57 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 79 general practices in 22 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 17.1 per 100 000 patient population.

Figure 1 compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. Hutt had the highest consultation rate (142.9 per 100 000), followed by Otago (114.2 per 100 000).

Figure 1

Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by health district
week ending 16 May 2004

Nineteen swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Sixteen swabs were received by virology laboratories. One influenza B virus from Central Auckland was reported for the sentinel surveillance.

No isolates were reported by regional virology laboratories from the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance.
Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2002 and 2003 seasons, and 2004 so far. The current rate of influenza is lower than at the same time last year.

Figure 2

*Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness in New Zealand, 2002, 2003 and 2004*
Figure 3 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 20, 2004.

Figure 3

The threshold used to describe the influenza-like activity can be referred in New Zealand Public Health Report 2001, 8 (1): 9-12

“Influenza surveillance and immunisation in New Zealand, 1990-1999”

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