World Health Organization
REPUBLIC OF LEBANON MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

# Lebanese Epi-Monitor

Updates & Reviews

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## Current Health Event

### Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI)

Under the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework, Lebanon initiated SARI sentinel surveillance which aims to provide data and baseline patterns on seasonal influenza virus circulation in order to disseminate information to the regional and international dimensions related to SARI.

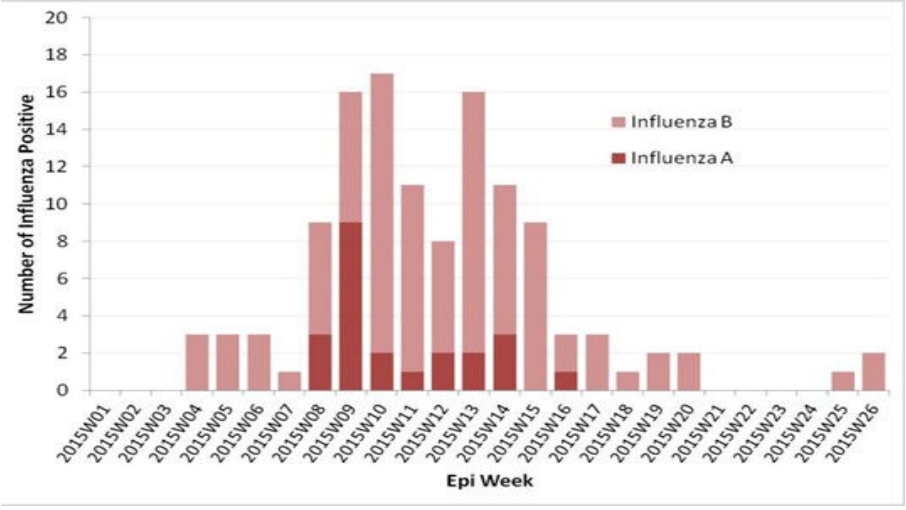
## Editorial note:

The global SARI surveillance system aims to measure disease burden of SARI in general and of influenza in particular in terms of incidence, mortality, and identifying groups at high risk of complications. It also aims to detect any novel emerging infectious agents, in particular novel influenza viruses.

In Lebanon, the SARI project was launched in December 2014 by the Ministry of Public Health's Epidemiological Surveillance Unit and directly supported by WHO. The implementation of the project started with assessment and selection of sentinel sites, selection of focal people, development of the national protocol for SARI surveillance, training of focal people, training on laboratory biorisk management, procurement of equipment, reagents and infection prevention control equipment. To date, 10 sentinel centers are enrolled.

A national expert committee oversees the project and provides technical backup.

**Figure: Influenza A and B positive from week 1 to 26, 2015.**




Collected specimen are referred to the National Influenza Center (NIC) at Rafic Hariri University Hospital, established with WHO support.

The total number of reported cases for three sentinel sites during January to June 2015 was 461. An overall of 412 specimens were collected and tested at the NIC, 121 (29%) tested positive. Most of the specimens were positive for Influenza B (80%) while the rest were positive for influenza A.

**SARI case definition:**

- **History of fever or currently having fever (≥ 38°C)**
- **Cough**
- **Onset of these symptoms within the last 10 days**
- **And requiring hospitalization.**

Most of the influenza A were unsubtypable; only three were subtyped to be H3N2 and none was positive for H1N1. Most of the cases were reported during the first weeks of 2015. Children less than 5 years old accounted for more than half of the total number of cases.

## Cumulative Notifiable Diseases in Lebanon*

| Disease | 2014 | 2015** | Oct. | Nov. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vaccine Preventable Diseases** | | | | |
| Polio | 0(0) | 0 (0) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| AFP | 53(16) | 75(9) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Measles | 235(107) | 37(11) | 1(1) | 6(1) |
| Mumps | 736(117) | 1400(337) | 15(6) | 4(1) |
| Pertussis | 87(25) | 37(6) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Rabies | 1(0) | 0(0) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Rubella | 18(12) | 9(1) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Tetanus | 0(0) | 3(0) | 1(0) | 0(0) |
| Viral Hep. B | 218(33) | 140(22) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| **Water/Food Borne Diseases** | | | | |
| Brucellosis | 252(36) | 333(57) | 11(3) | 1(0) |
| Cholera | 0(0) | 0(0) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Hydatid cyst | 16(2) | 14(1) | 0(0) | 0(0) |
| Typhoid fever | 546(33) | 473(50) | 67(9) | 2(0) |
| Viral Hep. A | 2582(911) | 877(159) | 52(4) | 4(0) |
| **Other Diseases** | | | | |
| Leishmaniasis | 663(638) | 32(23) | 0(0 | 0(0) |
| Meningitis | 232(35) | 309(53) | 16(0) | 10(2) |
| Viral Hep C | 100(6) | 65(3) | 0(0) | 0(0) |

**Numbers in brackets refer to Syrian **as of 20 Nov 2015*