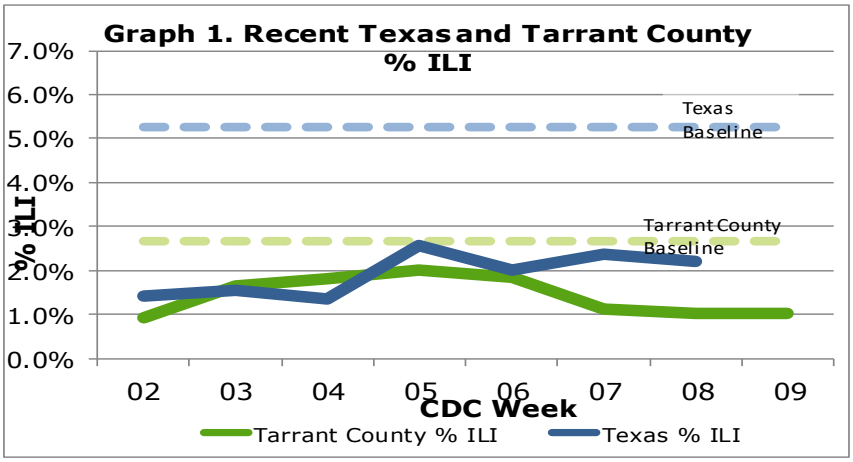
Tarrant County Public Health
Division of Epidemiology and Health Information

Tarrant County Influenza Surveillance Weekly Report
CDC Week 9: February 28-March 6, 2021

Influenza Activity Code:
County and State Levels

Tarrant County: Week 9
No Activity
Tarrant County: Week 8
No Activity
Texas: Week 8
Minimal

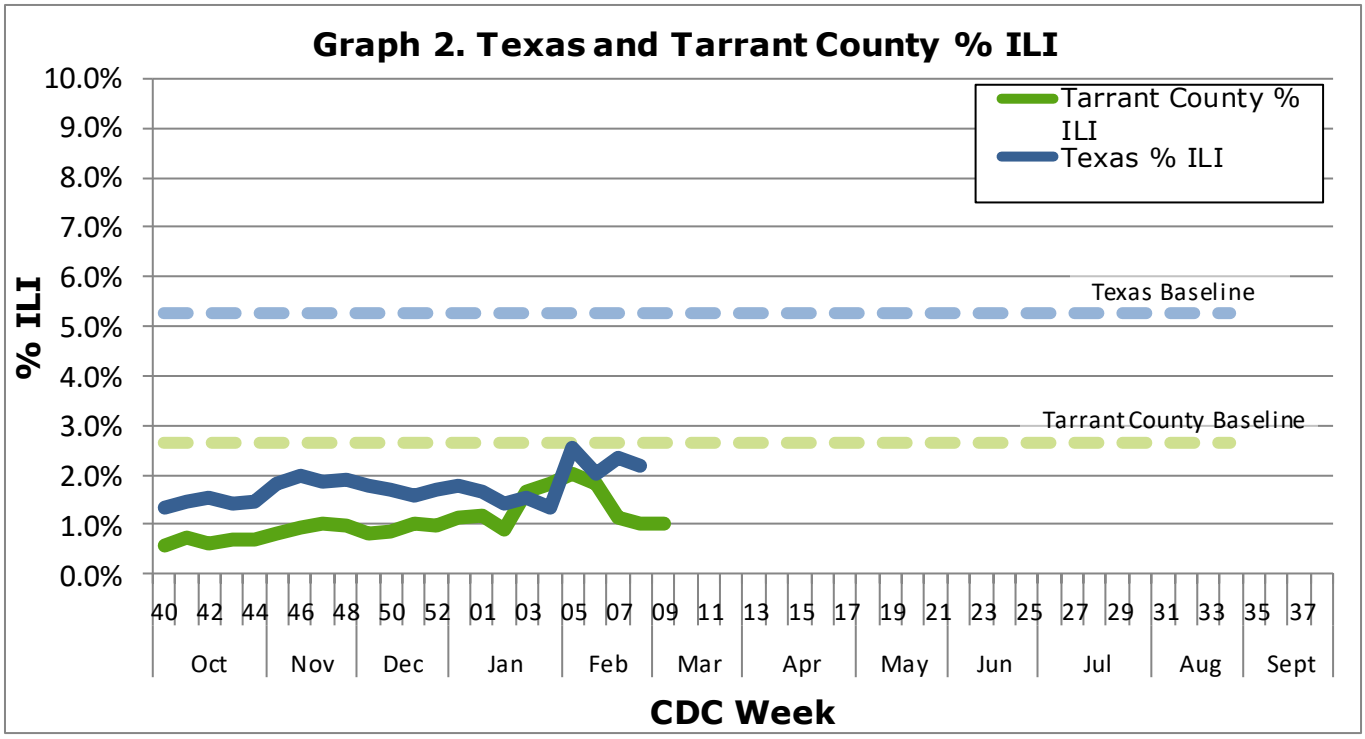


NOTE: The COVID-19 outbreak unfolding in the United States may affect healthcare seeking behavior which in turn would impact ILI data.

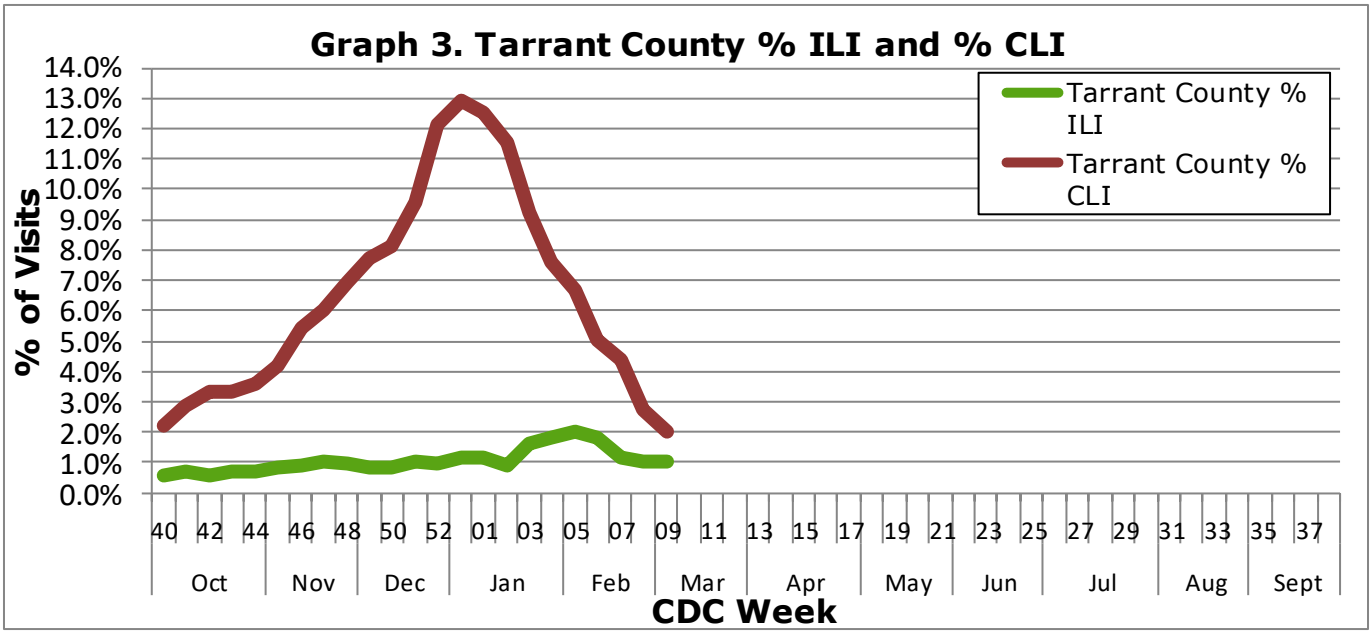
Respiratory Virus Activity Summary

- The percentage of reported influenza-like illness (ILI) in Tarrant County was unchanged from 1.0% in week 8 to 1.0% in week 9 and is currently below the 2020-2021 Tarrant County baseline (2.7%).
- The percentage of all cause school absenteeism was 4.1% during week 9 in Tarrant County. Absenteeism due to ILI and school nurse office visits due to ILI were 1.1% and 1.8% respectively during week 9 in Tarrant County.
- The percentage of rapid flu test positives in Tarrant County increased from 0.4% in week 8 to 0.8% in week 9.
- Based on data from the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community -based Epidemics, the percentage of patients hospitalized following ER visits who were diagnosed with influenza decreased from 0.1% in week 8 to 0.0% in week 9.
- During the 2020-2021 influenza season, as of week 9, 0 Tarrant County influenza-associated pediatric deaths have been reported. As of week 8, 0 influenza-associated pediatric deaths have been reported in Texas, with a total of 1 reported in the United States for the 2020-2021 season.
- During the 2020-2021 influenza season, 0 influenza outbreaks have been reported in Tarrant County within institutions in Tarrant County.
- Since last report, 19 surveillance specimens were tested by The North Texas Regional Laboratory. Cumulatively this season, the North Texas Regional Laboratory at Tarrant County Public Health has tested 354 surveillance specimens and of these, 0 have been positive for influenza and 87 have been positive for SARS-CoV-2.
- In Texas during week 8, the proportion of outpatient visits for ILI, 2.2%, was below the state baseline of 5.3%.
- Nationally during week 8, 0.1% of specimens tested and reported to the CDC were positive for influenza. The proportion of outpatient visits for ILI (1.0%) was below the national baseline (2.6%). The proportion of deaths in week 8 attributed to pneumonia, influenza, and COVID-19 from the National Center for Health Statistics (16.4%) was above the epidemic threshold (7.2%).

Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and COVID-19 Like Illness (CLI)



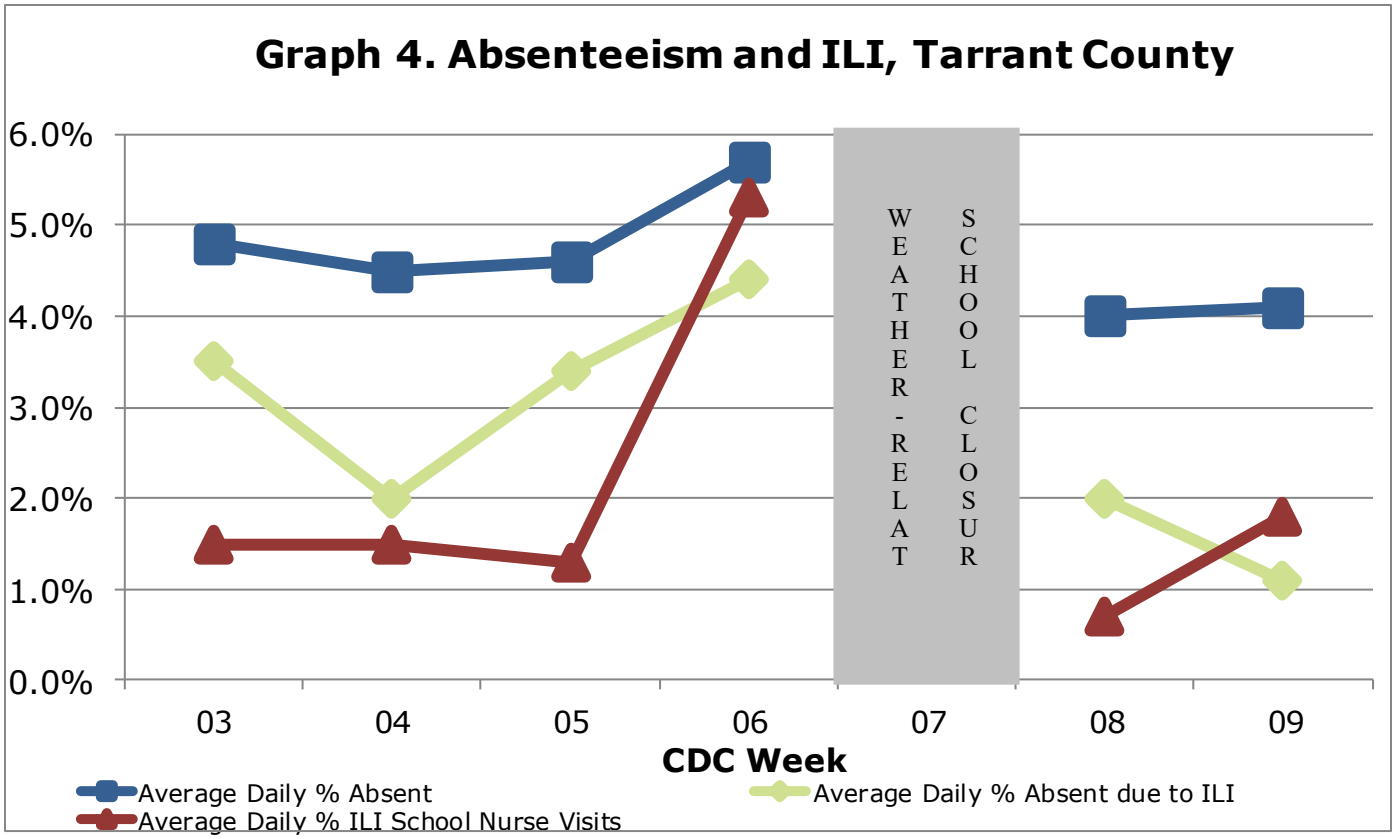
In week 9, 1.0% of visits to health care providers were due to ILI. ILI levels are currently below the county established baseline of 2.7% and are lower than the state of Texas levels from the week prior.



COVID-19-like illness is defined as visits with a mention of Fever AND (Cough OR Shortness of Breath OR Difficulty Breathing) AND NOT (Influenza Diagnosis). These counts do not reflect confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

NOTE: Tarrant County ILI and CLI activity are assessed using information available from the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE). ILI and CLI visits are determined by identifying key terms and codes within the chief complaint field (i.e. the patients stated reason for visit), and diagnosis code field (i.e. ICD-9-CM and ICD-10-CM codes).

School Absenteeism and ESSENCE Geographical Distribution Map



The percentage of all cause school absenteeism was 4.1% during week 9 in Tarrant County. Absenteeism due to ILI and school nurse office visits due to ILI were 1.1% and 1.8% respectively.

Map 1. Tarrant County ER ILI Cases by Zip Code

No map available for week 9.

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 Test Results

Table 1. Influenza Test Results, Tarrant County

CDC Week Number	7	8	9
# Influenza Tests Performed	769	464	671
% Influenza Positive	0.1%	0.4%	0.8%
# Influenza A Positive	0	2	1
% Influenza A Positive	0.0%	100%	20%
# Influenza B Positive	1	0	4
% Influenza B Positive	100.0%	0.0%	80%
# Non-differentiated Positive	0	0	0
% Non-differentiated Positive	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

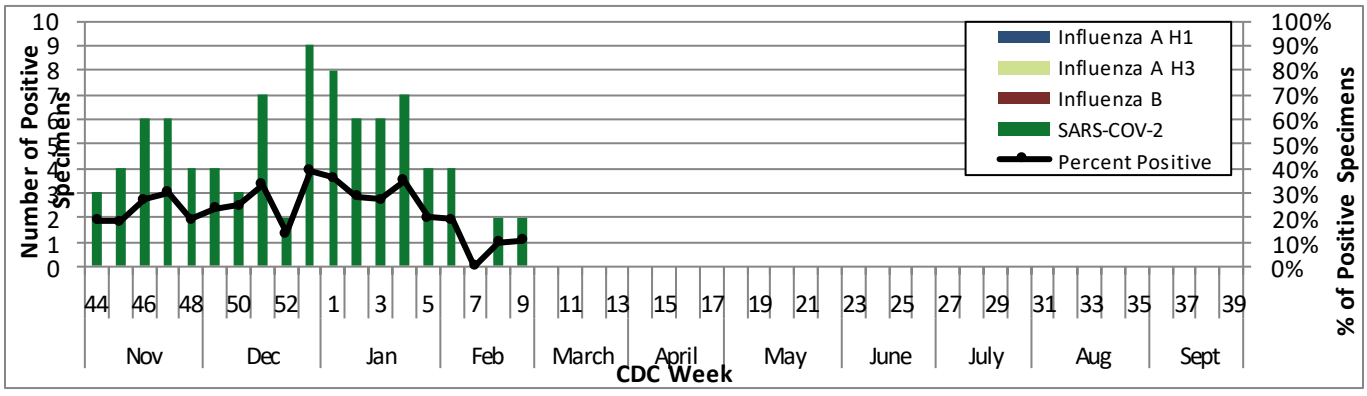
NOTE: Tarrant County influenza test results are reported weekly by influenza surveillance participants. For CDC week 9, rapid influenza test results were reported by 13 hospitals and 1 university.

Table 2. North Texas Regional Laboratory: Respiratory Virus Results[1]

	Current Week	2020-2021 Season
Number of Specimens Tested	**19**	**354**
Positive Specimens	2	87 (25.4%)
Influenza A	0	0
Influenza A H1	-	-
Influenza A H3	-	-
Influenza A, Inconclusive subtype	-	-
Influenza A, Unsubtypeable[2]	-	-
Influenza B	0	0
Influenza B Yamagata[3]	-	-
Influenza B Victoria[3]	-	-
Influenza B, Inconclusive	-	-
SARS-CoV-2	2 (100%)	87 (100.0%)
Inconclusive[4]	-	0

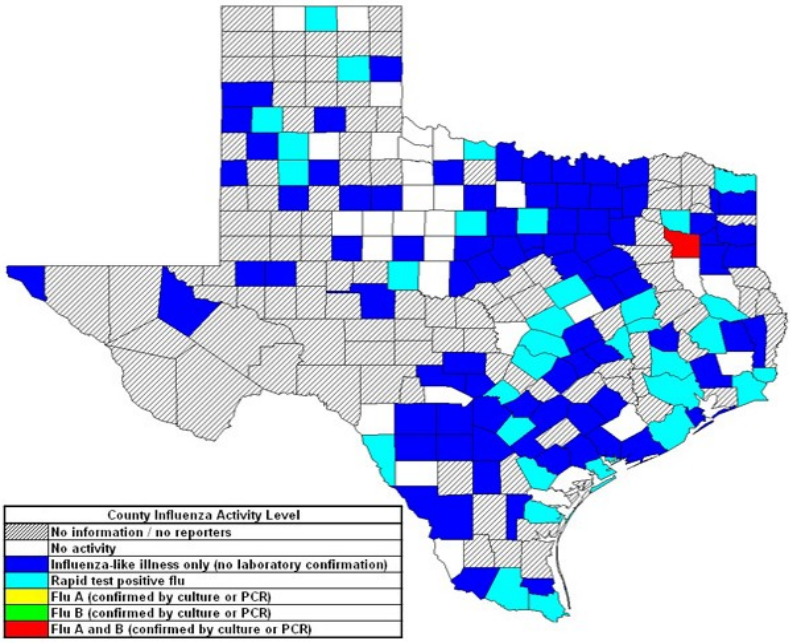
[1] *Laboratory results based on real-time PCR analysis; information is for the 2020-2021 season.*
[2] *Influenza A subtype not determined; further analysis pending*
[3] *Influenza B genotyping is only included in current week column if genotyping occurred in the same week as original PCR testing.*
[4] *Inconclusive for influenza A and influenza B; not included in positive specimens count.*

Graph 6. North Texas Regional Laboratory: Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 Virus Results[1]



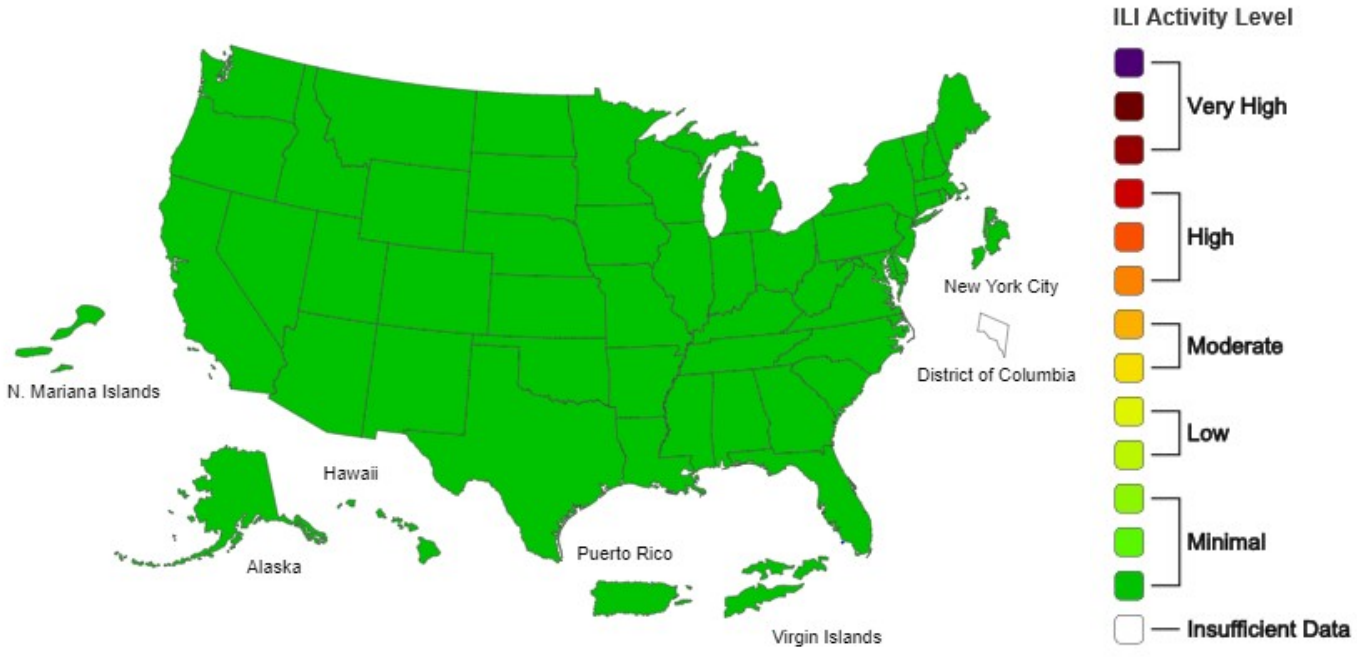
Texas and National Influenza and ILI Activity

Map 2: Texas County Specific Influenza Activity, CDC Week 9



Influenza activity level corresponds to current MMWR week only and does not reflect previous weeks' activity. The majority of influenza cases are not reportable by law to the Texas Department of State Health Services. This map contains data from sentinel sites and does not represent all influenza cases in the state. Positive laboratory results are reported according to specimen collection date or date received in the lab if the former is unknown. https://www.dshs.texas.gov/IDCU/disease/influenza/surveillance/2020-2021.aspx

Map 3: ILINet Activity Indicator Map, CDC Week 6



Data collected in ILINet are used to produce a measure of ILI activity by state. Activity levels are based on the percent of outpatient visits in a state due to ILI and are compared to the average percent of ILI visits that occur during spring and fall weeks with little or no influenza virus circulation. This map uses the proportion of outpatient visits to health care providers for influenza-like illness to measure the ILI activity level within a state. It does not, however, measure the extent of geographic spread of flu within a state. Therefore, outbreaks occurring in a single city could cause the state to display high activity levels. Data collected in ILINet may disproportionately represent certain populations within a state, and therefore, may not accurately depict the full picture of influenza activity for the whole state. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/

The Tarrant County Influenza Surveillance Weekly Report is available on the Tarrant County Public Health web site at:

flu.tarrantcounty.com

If you have questions or comments regarding influenza surveillance, please contact:

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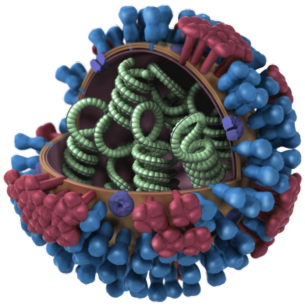

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Director, Tarrant County Public Health

NOTE:

Influenza-like Illness (ILI) is defined as fever (temperature ≥ 100°F) plus a cough OR a sore throat, in the absence of a known cause other than influenza.

Tarrant County reporting quadrants consist of Northwest, Northeast, Southwest and Southeast regions within the boundaries of Interstate 35 and Interstate 30.

Tarrant County ILI baselines were determined using a similar method as the Centers for Disease Control Prevention Regional ILI baselines and Texas Department of State Health Services Texas baseline. Regional ILI baselines are determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and can be accessed at http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm

Additional information regarding Tarrant County, Texas and national ILI activity can be accessed at

flu.tarrantounty.com

https://www.dshs.texas.gov/IDCU/disease/influenza/surveillance/2020-2021.aspx

http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/

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