



Web query-based surveillance in Sweden during the influenza A(H1N1)2009 pandemic, April 2009 to February 2010.

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Abstract: At the Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control, statistical models based on queries submitted to a Swedish medical website are used as a complement to the regular influenza surveillance. The models have previously been shown to perform well for seasonal influenza. The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the performance of the statistical models in the context of the influenza A(H1N1)2009 pandemic, a period when many factors, for example the media, could have influenced people's search behaviour on the Internet and consequently the performance of the models. Our evaluation indicates consistent good reliability for the statistical models also during the pandemic. When compared to Google Flu Trends for Sweden, they were at least equivalent in terms of estimating the influenza activity, and even seemed to be more precise in estimating the peak incidence of the influenza pandemic.

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