



Respiratory virus statistics March/April 2020

Figure 1: Respiratory Virus Multiplex PCR: Countrywide March/April 2020

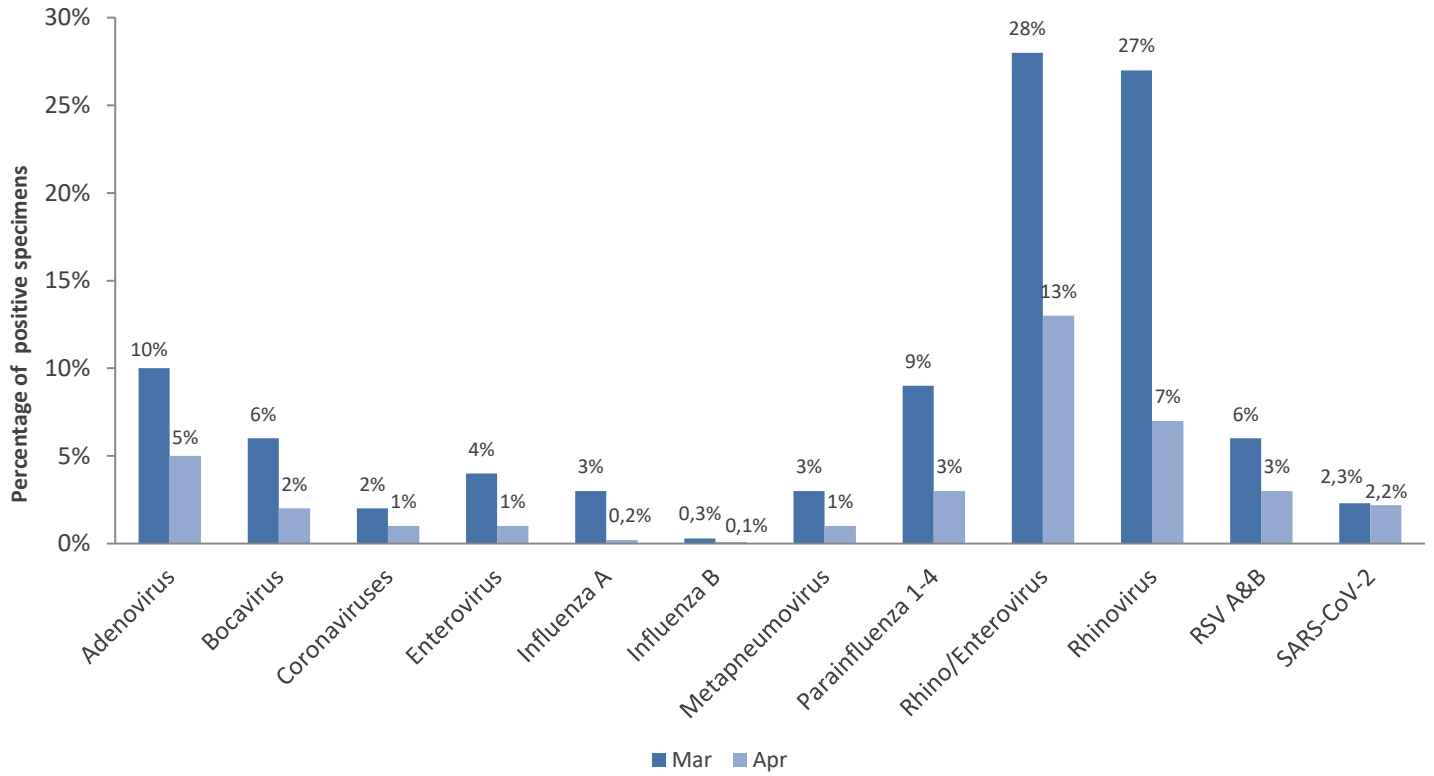
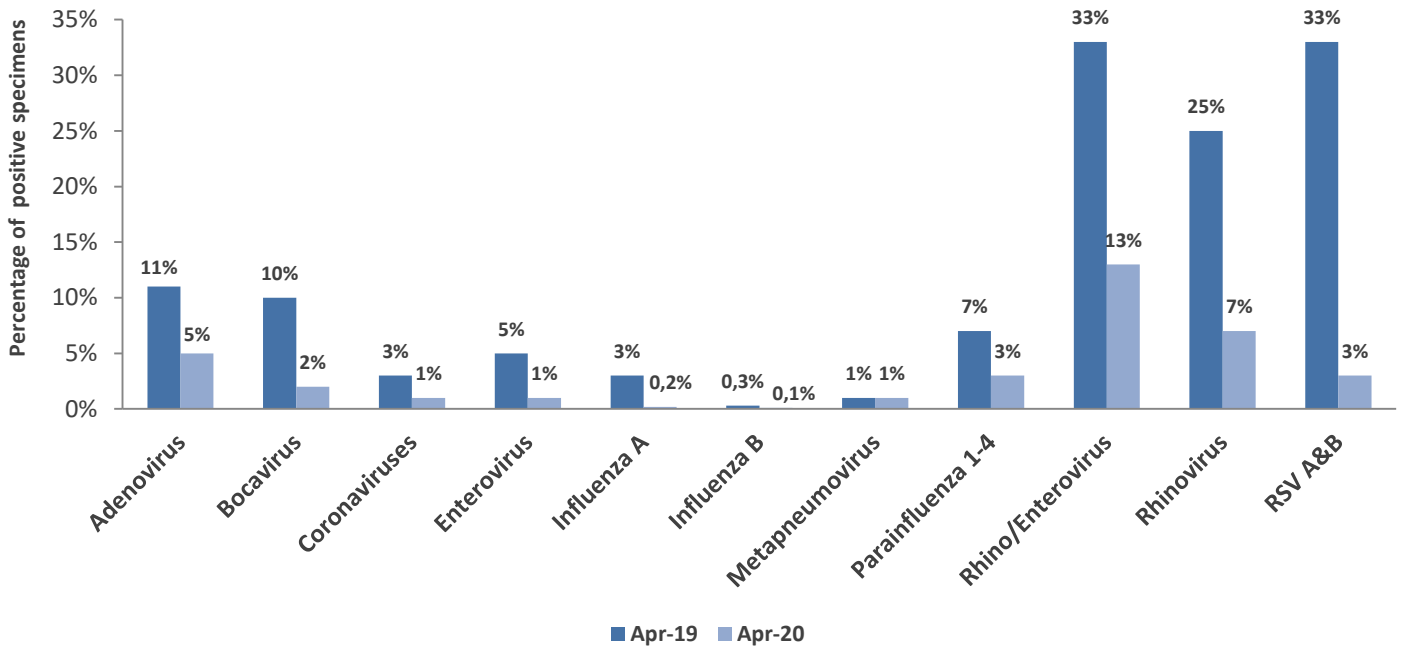


Figure 2: Respiratory Virus Multiplex PCR: Countrywide April 2019 vs April 2020



Respiratory virus multiplex PCR: April findings

- The most frequently detected viruses during April were Rhinovirus/Enterovirus (13%), Rhinovirus (7%) and Adenovirus (5%).
- The novel Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 was detected in 2.3% of specimens submitted in March and 2.2% of specimens submitted in April for SARS-CoV-2 testing.
- There was a significant decrease in test volumes (\pm 63% decrease) for April 2020 compared to test volumes for April 2019.
- This was accompanied by an overall decrease in positivity rates for all viruses tested during April 2020 as compared to March 2020. The magnitude of the decrease in positivity rate is highlighted when comparing the detection rates for April 2020 to the detection rates of April 2019:
 - Influenza A 3% in April 2019 vs 0,2% in April 2020
 - RSV 33% in April 2019 vs 3% in April 2020
 - Rhino/Enterovirus 33% in April 2019 vs 13% in April 2020
 - Bocavirus 10% in April 2019 vs 2% in April 2020
- The decrease in testing volumes and positivity rates are most likely a consequence of the level 5 lockdown, school closures and social distancing implemented as part of SARS-CoV-2 control measures. Clinicians are urged to remain vigilant and bear in mind that traditionally we would be seeing high levels of RSV and would be entering the Influenza season. As the lockdown is eased we may be seeing higher rates of respiratory viral infections.
- Please note: the Graphs include the combined data from different Respiratory multiplex assays offered by Ampath laboratories.
- Please note: none of the multiplex molecular panels in use at Ampath includes the SARS-CoV-2 virus. SARS-CoV-2 virus PCR must be specifically requested.
- Refer to the Ampath website for the current and previous respiratory viral statistics both countrywide and per region: <https://www.ampath.co.za/respiratory-tract-infection>