This report describes current trends in suburban Cook County for COVID-19, influenza, and RSV. Selected graphics are presented on pages 2-4. For complete surveillance data on these pathogens, please visit our respiratory dashboard.

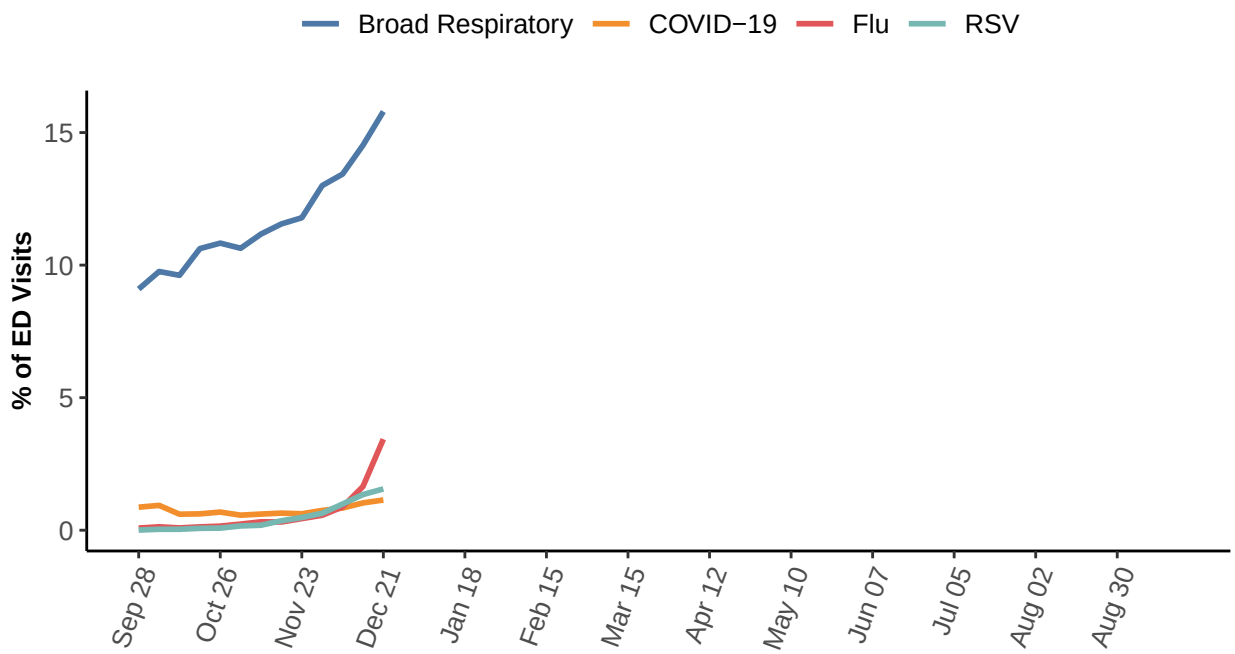
Key Points

COVID-19 activity is **low** and increasing. **Influenza** activity is **moderate** and increasing. **RSV** activity is **high** and increasing.

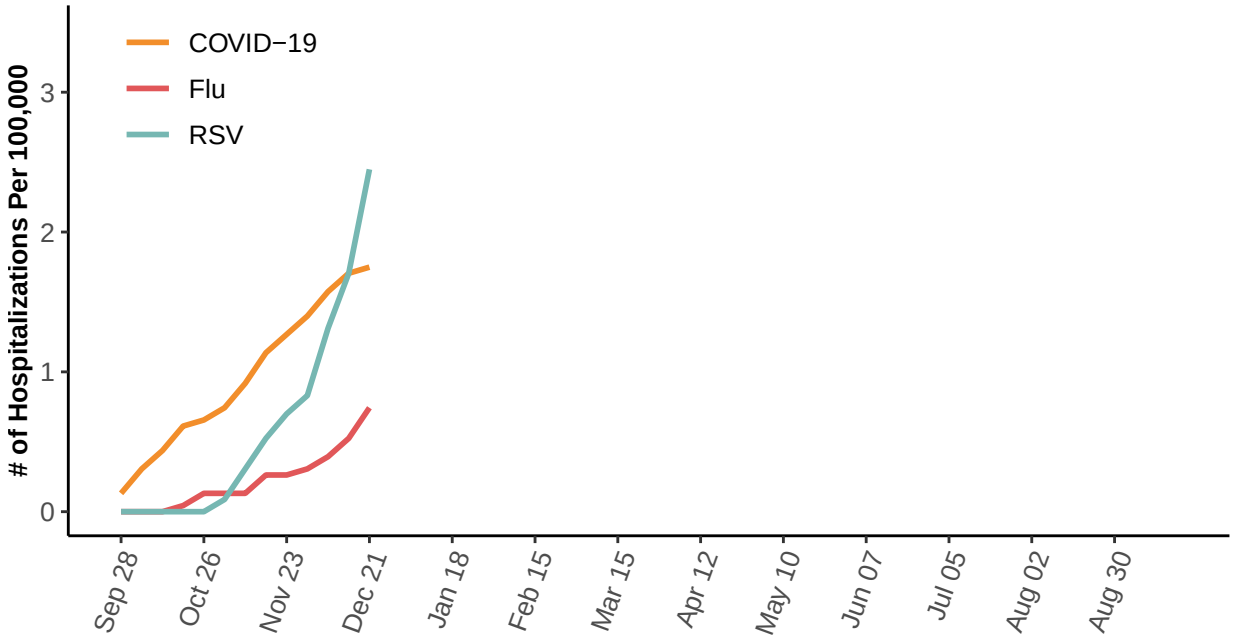
- RSV activity has been elevated to high, and continues to increase. We may be approaching the peak of the RSV season. Flu was elevated to moderate this week. COVID-19 remains low, but is also increasing.
- Emergency room visits for flu are increasing exponentially and are the highest of the three monitored respiratory viruses. Visits for children under 18 are increasing the fastest. ER visits for RSV are near the peak of last season.
- ICU admissions are highest for RSV, the vast majority of which have been in children under 5. ICU admissions for flu are also steadily increasing. COVID-19 ICU admissions continue to be reported, primarily in adults over 65.
- Percent positivity for flu almost doubled from last week, increasing from 6.4% to 11.4%. Of specimens tested for RSV, 12.9% were positive, similar to the peak of last year's RSV season (13.4%). COVID-19 positivity is 6.7%.
- So far this season, among positive flu A specimens with influenza subtype available, 65% were pandemic 2009 H1N1 and 35% were H3N2.
- Wastewater detections for RSV and flu are increasing exponentially. Current viral concentrations are similar to the peak of last year's RSV season. Wastewater detections for SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) are also increasing.
- Wastewater sequencing data for SARS-CoV-2 indicate a variety of JN.1 sub-lineages are co-circulating, including XEC, KP.3, and KP.3.1.1.
- CDC's core recommendations for *individuals* include staying up to date with all recommended respiratory virus vaccines, practicing good respiratory hygiene (covering your cough, washing your hands), taking steps for cleaner air, and using precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses when you are sick. This means staying home until you've been fever-free for 24 hours and your symptoms are getting better. CDC also recommends individuals are familiar with treatment options for flu and COVID-19, especially if you are at high risk for severe outcomes.
- CDC's core recommendations for *organizations* include supporting vaccination efforts (like hosting a clinic or providing time off for vaccination and recovery), encouraging good respiratory hygiene with posters and adequate hand-washing supplies, taking steps for cleaner air, and supporting time off for individuals to stay home when sick or to seek treatment.
- Respiratory season is in full swing, especially among children under 18. Individuals at risk for severe outcomes from flu or RSV may wish to take additional precautions, such as masking or physical distancing. Individuals and healthcare providers should be aware of treatment options for respiratory viruses, especially influenza.

We would like to thank all of our surveillance partners for their help in collecting this information! Additional details on our methods can be found here

Emergency Rooms Visits by Respiratory Diagnosis

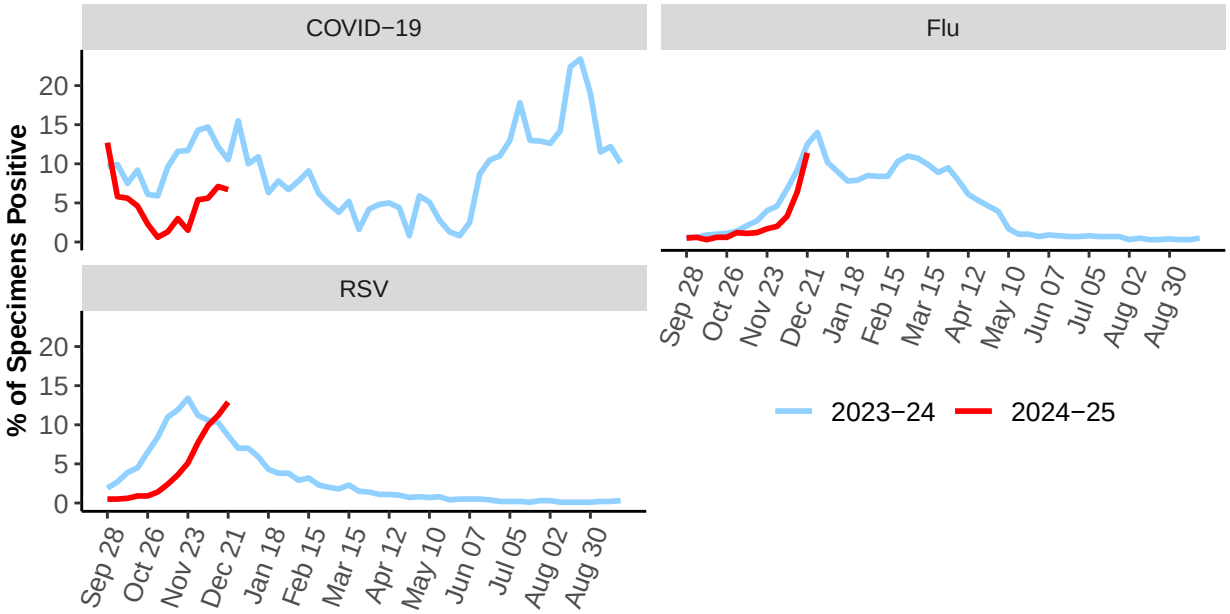


Cumulative ICU Admission Rate for Reportable Respiratory Viruses



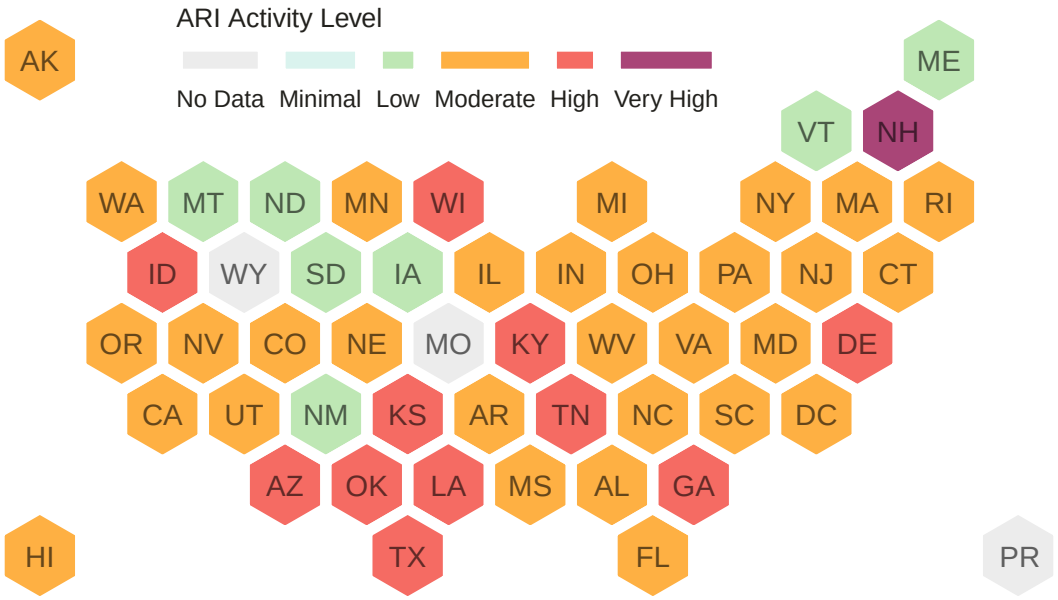
Percent Positivity by Respiratory Virus

Laboratories contributing data differ by pathogen. Lab data may not be comparable between viruses. Graphics are better used to look at trajectory for a given virus over time.

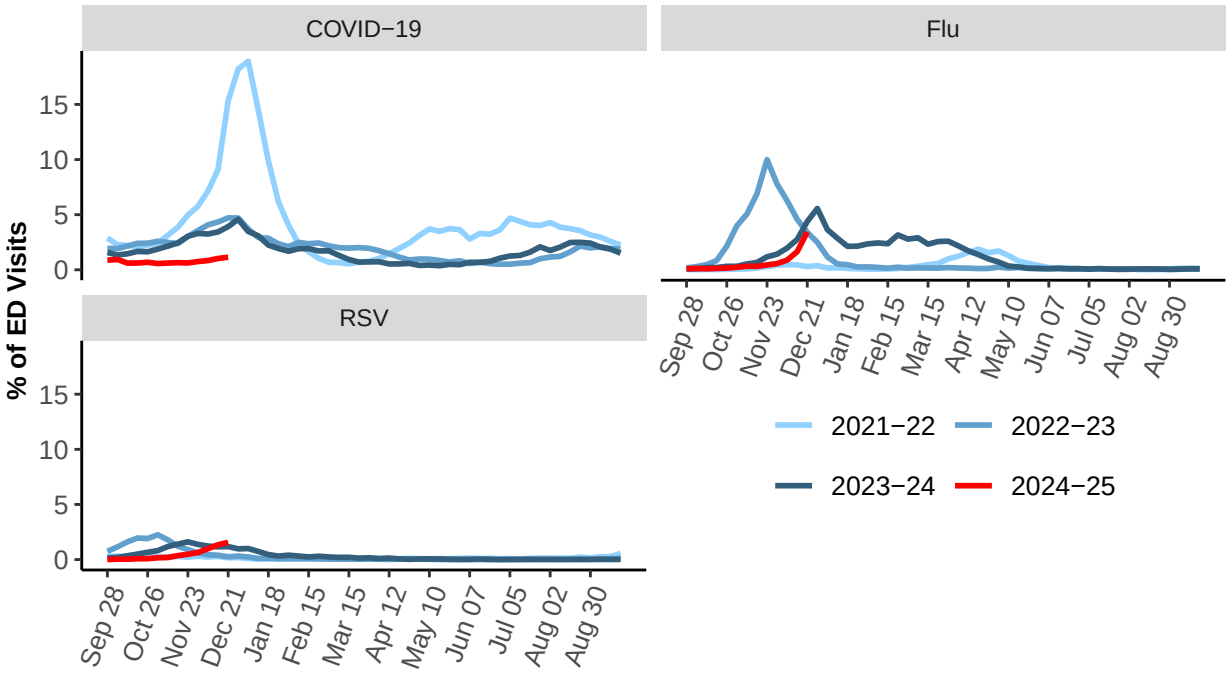


CDC Acute Respiratory Illness Activity Levels by State

Data for the week ending 2024-12-21, most recent CDC data available



Emergency Rooms Visits by Season and Diagnosis



Emergency Room Visits by Age and Diagnosis