

# RESPIRATORY VIRUS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

Week 17: Apr 26-May 02, 2026



Cook County DEPT of  
Public Health

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**Purpose:** 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](#).

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## Key Points:

### COVID-19, Influenza, RSV

- COVID-19 and flu activity remain minimal, and RSV activity remains low.
- Most RSV indicators continued to decline this week, including RSV-associated hospital admissions and emergency department visits. These metrics are now at or below the levels they were at this time last year.
- All flu indicators continue to plateau or trend down.
- Most COVID-19 indicators declined this week, though ICU admissions are still being reported.

### Is anything else going around?

- Percent positivity for [rhinovirus/enterovirus](#), common cold viruses, has increased sharply over the last month and is higher than values seen in the fall. It is typical for these viruses to have a fall wave and a spring wave.
- Test positivity for [common human coronaviruses](#) remains elevated but is declining. *These viruses are not the same as the virus that causes COVID-19.* They typically cause mild illness but sometimes can lead to lower respiratory tract illness like pneumonia or bronchitis.
- Detections of [human metapneumovirus \(HMPV\)](#) are elevated above baseline and are near last year's peak positivity. HMPV causes symptoms similar to other respiratory viruses but may linger longer.
- Detections of the bacteria that cause [strep throat](#) are also above baseline, but below the peaks of the last few seasons.

### Recommendations

- Some steps for protection from respiratory viruses should be practiced year-round, regardless of the current activity level. These steps include staying up to date with all recommended respiratory [vaccines](#), practicing good respiratory hygiene (covering your cough, washing your hands), taking steps for cleaner [air](#), and staying home when you're sick until you've been fever-free for 24 hours and your symptoms are getting better. People who are at [high risk](#) for severe outcomes should be familiar with treatment options for flu and COVID-19. Organizations can support these recommendations by offering time off when employees are sick, hosting vaccination clinics, maintaining adequate ventilation systems, and encouraging good respiratory hygiene with posters and adequate hand-washing supplies. (Note that CDC offers separate, specific guidance for healthcare settings for reducing transmission of [flu](#), [COVID-19](#), and other [pathogens](#)).
- The respiratory season for our primary monitored pathogens - COVID-19, flu, and RSV - is winding down; however, several "common cold" viruses are still circulating above baseline. Residents should continue to focus on year-round prevention activities, such as washing your hands and staying home when sick.

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](#).

# RESPIRATORY VIRUS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

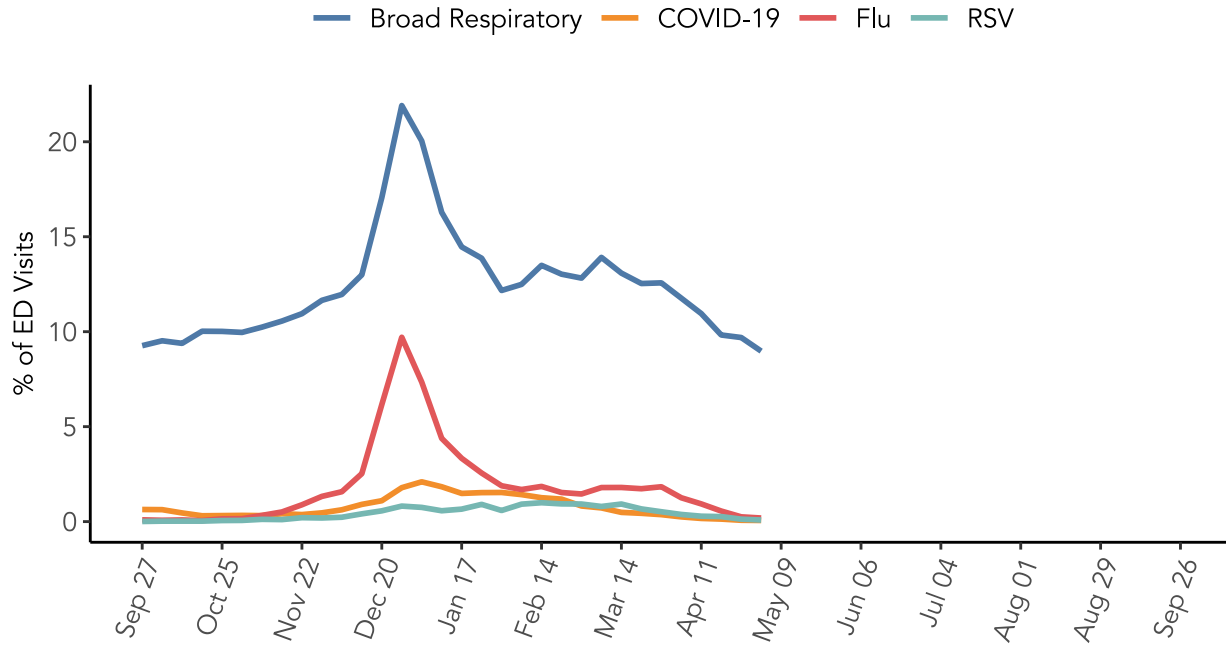
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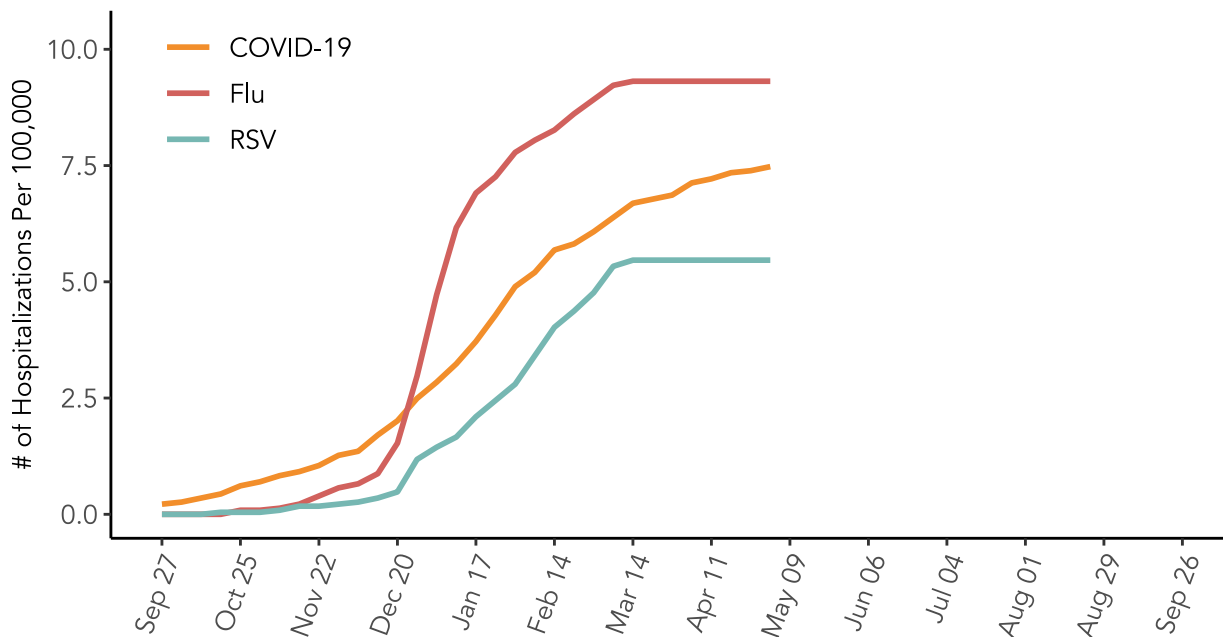
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## Emergency Rooms Visits by Respiratory Diagnosis



## Cumulative ICU Admission Rate for Reportable Respiratory Viruses



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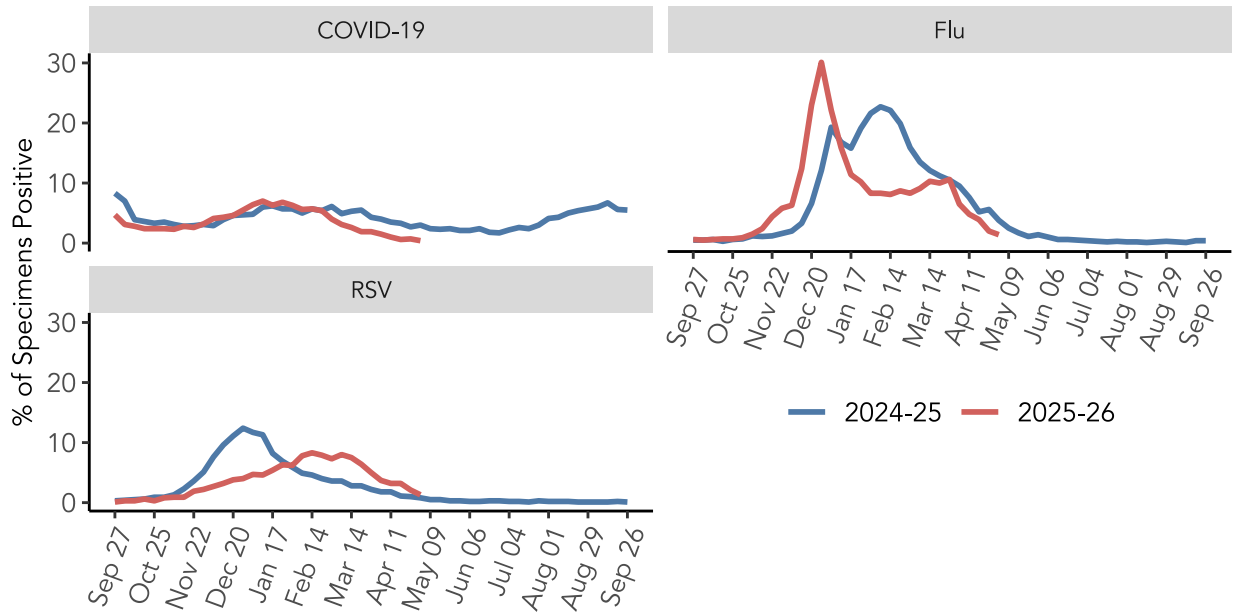


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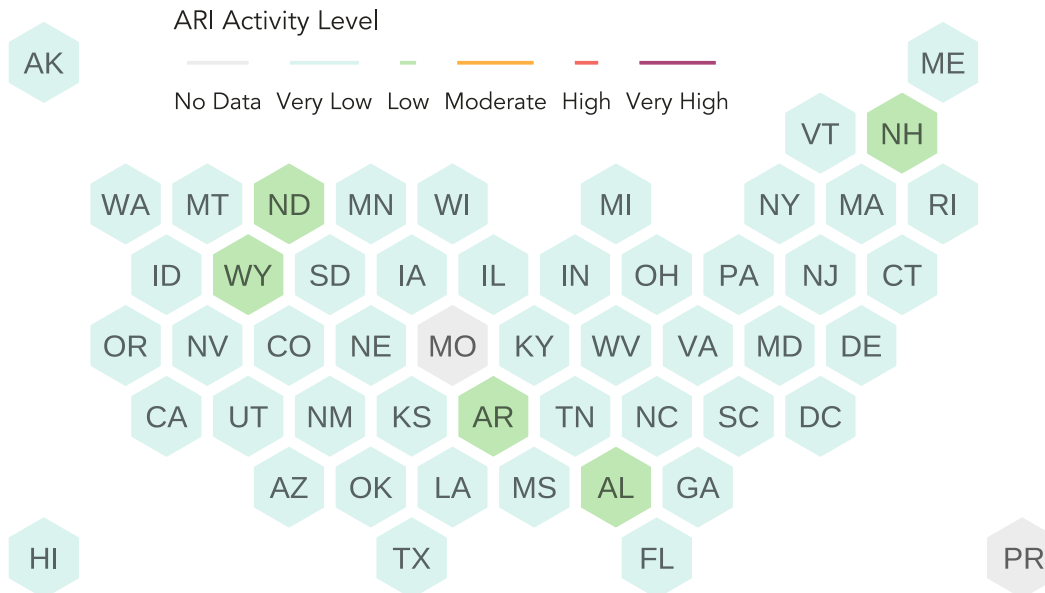
## Percent Positivity by Respiratory Virus

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 2026-05-02, most recent CDC data available



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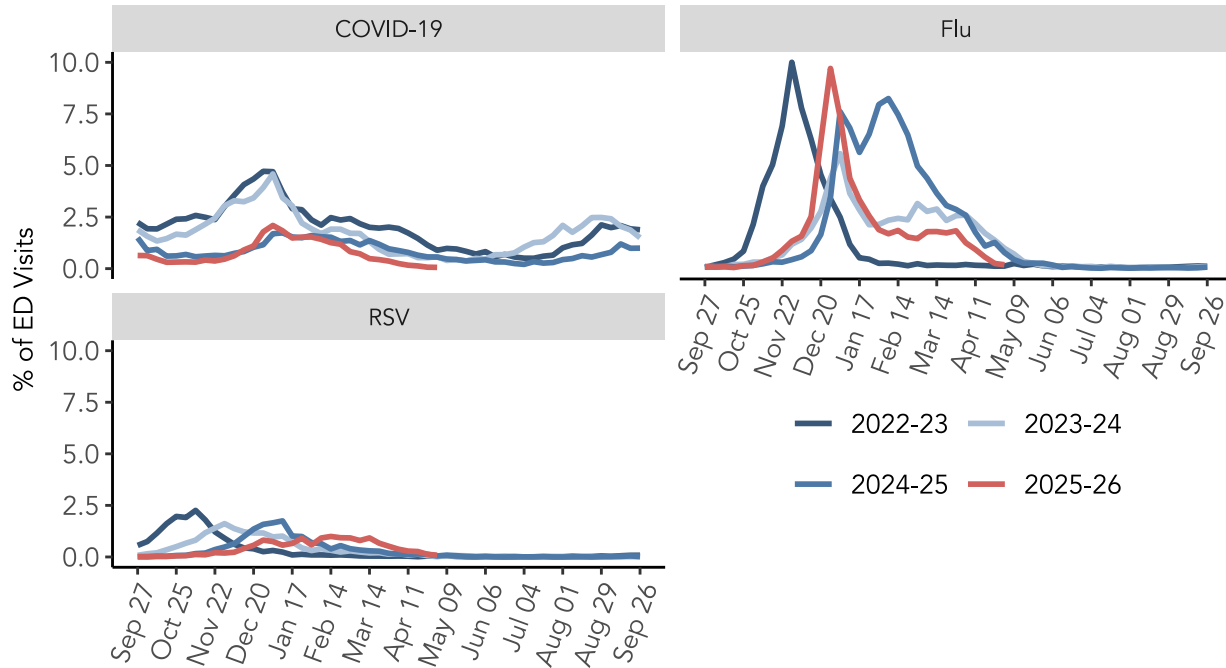
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## Emergency Rooms Visits by Season and Diagnosis



## Emergency Room Visits by Age and Diagnosis

