



Respiratory Epidemiological Summary

October 26, 2023

Summary (Epidemiological week 42, 15 Oct to 21 Oct)

COVID-19 activity continued to increase in wastewater plants but has decreased in select clinical indicators; influenza and RSV activity remains low.

- SARS-CoV-2 levels have increased at all wastewater plants across the province. COVID-19 activity decreased in select indicators, including testing positivity, cases (infection episodes), and hospital admissions. COVID-19 critical care admissions remain relatively stable. Deaths have continued to increase.
- Influenza A and B activity remained low over the last epi-week and below pre-pandemic historical levels (2014/15-2018/19 seasons). Among subtyped influenza A detections in the 2023/24 respiratory season so far, the majority were H1 (81%).
- Overall RSV activity remained low and comparable to pre-pandemic historical levels (2014/15-2018/19 seasons). RSV test positivity for children has increased between epi-weeks 39 (September 24-30) to 42 (October 15-21), which is above the pre-pandemic historical average.
- The share of emergency department visits for respiratory symptoms has been comparable to historical averages (2021-2023 seasons). Pediatric emergency department visits were stable and below historical averages (2021-2023 seasons) in the last epi-week.

National and international context

COVID-19:

- In Canada, most provinces and territories observed stable trends in COVID-19 activity levels (e.g., outbreaks and test positivity), with some provinces and territories showing early signs of decreases in test positivity.
- In the USA, there are signs of COVID-19 stabilization since epi-week 37, with a slight decrease in weekly cases, test positivity, emergency department visits and hospitalizations.

Influenza:

- In Canada, influenza activity remained stable and at levels normally observed between influenza seasons. Similar to BC, Influenza A H1 has been the predominant identified subtype since the start of the 2023/24 respiratory season in the country.
- In the USA, seasonal influenza activity remains low nationally, but there are slight increases in some parts of the country.

RSV and other viruses:

- In Canada, activity of RSV and other non-SARS-CoV-2 and non-influenza respiratory viruses is low and at expected levels at this time of year.