



Respiratory Epidemiological Summary

November 02, 2023

Summary (Epidemiological week 43, 22 Oct to 28 Oct)

Early indications of COVID-19 activity stabilizing; influenza and RSV activity remain low.

- COVID-19 activity has decreased since early October in select indicators, including testing positivity, cases (infection episodes), and hospital admissions. COVID-19 critical care admissions and deaths remain relatively stable. Some wastewater sites continue to see increasing concentrations of SARS-CoV-2, but the rate of increase is slowing.
- Influenza 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 continued to increase since epi-week 39 (September 24-30) and is above the pre-pandemic historical average.
- The share of adult emergency department visits for respiratory symptoms has been comparable to historical averages (2021-2023 seasons). Pediatric emergency department visits remain below historical averages (2021-2023 seasons) but are gradually increasing. The share of visits to community healthcare practitioners for respiratory symptoms has gradually increased since mid-August.

National and international context

COVID-19:

- In Canada, most provinces and territories observed stable or increasing trends in COVID-19 activity levels (i.e. outbreaks and test positivity), with some provinces and territories showing early signs of decreases in test positivity.
- In the USA, COVID-19 activity for test positivity and hospitalizations remains stable. There are signs of decreasing emergency department visits and increasing deaths.

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. Influenza A was the most frequently reported type (77%) since the start of October; among those subtyped, 93% were H1.

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.