



Respiratory Epidemiological Summary

November 09, 2023

Summary (Epidemiological week 44, 29 Oct to 04 Nov)

COVID-19 activity has decreased since early October and is stabilizing; influenza and RSV activity remain low but are beginning to increase.

- COVID-19 testing positivity, cases (infection episodes), and hospital admissions have decreased from a peak in early October; critical care admissions and deaths remain relatively stable.
- Influenza activity has slightly increased but remains low and comparable to 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 is low but continuing to increase. RSV test positivity for children has increased 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 are gradually increasing but remain below historical averages (2021-2023 seasons). 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 reporting provinces and territories observed stable or decreasing trends in COVID-19 activity levels (e.g., outbreaks and test positivity), with remaining provinces and territories showing early signs of levelling off or decreases in test positivity.
- In the USA, COVID-19 activity for test positivity, hospitalizations, and deaths remains stable. There are continuing signs of decreases in emergency department visits.

Influenza:

- In Canada, influenza activity remained stable and at levels normally observed between influenza seasons. As seen in BC, influenza A H1 has been the predominant identified subtype since the start of the 2023/24 respiratory season in the country, at 81% of subtyped influenza A detections (August 27 - October 28, 2023).
- In the USA, seasonal influenza activity remains low nationally, but there are slight increases in some parts of the country. Since the start of October, Influenza A was the most frequently reported type (67%); of those subtyped, 92% were H1.

RSV and other viruses:

- In Canada, RSV activity is gradually increasing as is expected for this time of the year but remains low. The activity of all other non-SARS-CoV-2 and non-influenza respiratory viruses is low and comparable to expected levels at this time of year.