

Respiratory virus activity in BC:

Weekly summary – January 29, 2026

Reporting period: January 18-24, 2026 (Epi-week 3)

Current respiratory activity is measured in consideration of recent past respiratory seasons.

Influenza and RSV activity are moderate; COVID-19 is low.

Influenza

Influenza test positivity continues to decrease and is at moderate levels. Wastewater viral loads are at low-to-moderate levels in most sites.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

RSV test positivity continues to increase and remains at moderate levels. Wastewater viral loads are at low-to-moderate levels.

COVID-19

SARS-CoV-2 test positivity is stable at low levels. Wastewater viral loads remain at low-to-moderate levels. Severe outcomes remain low.

Health care visits

The proportions of emergency department and primary care visits for respiratory illness are decreasing overall and are at moderate levels. Trends are comparable to prior seasons.

Special report now available

- [Influenza strain characterization mid-season report for the 2025/2026 influenza season](#)
Key takeaway: Among subtyped influenza A samples (n=4,824) collected between July 6, 2025 (epi-week 28) and January 3, 2026 (epi-week 53), the proportion of H1 and H3 viruses shifted from H1 predominance in the early season, to H3 predominance in mid-November through December. Since October, 90% of H3 viruses sequenced were subclade K. Most recently in December, this proportion increased to 97%. Notably, subclade K viruses have vaccine immune escape potential ([Sabaiduc et al., Oct 2025](#)).

National and international context

Influenza

- In Canada, all indicators of influenza activity decreased sharply in the most recent reporting week.¹
- In the USA, seasonal influenza activity remains elevated across the country but has decreased for three consecutive weeks.²

¹ Canadian Respiratory Virus Surveillance Report, <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/respiratory-virus-surveillance/>. Last updated on January 23, 2026.

² Respiratory Illnesses Data Channel, <https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/data/index.html>. Last updated on January 23, 2026.

- In the European Union/European Economic Area (EU/EEA), influenza circulation is high and affecting all age groups, with the peak appearing to have passed in several countries. An overall decreasing trend in hospitalisations reflects what is being observed in primary care. However, hospital admissions remain elevated, with the highest numbers seen in adults aged 65 years and above.³

RSV

- In Canada, indicators of RSV activity were either increasing or stable in the most recent reporting week.¹
- In the USA, RSV activity is elevated in many areas of the country, including emergency department visits among infants less than 1 year and children 1-4 years old and hospitalisations among infants less than 1 year old.²
- In the EU/EEA, RSV circulation is elevated and continues to increase. Hospital admissions are rising in most of the reporting countries, primarily among children under five years of age.³

COVID-19

- In Canada, indicators of COVID-19 activity were stable in the most recent reporting week.¹
- In the USA, COVID-19 activity is elevated in some areas of the country.²
- In the EU/EEA, SARS-CoV-2 circulation remains low in all age groups, and the impact on hospitalisations is currently limited.³

¹ Canadian Respiratory Virus Surveillance Report, <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/respiratory-virus-surveillance/>. Last updated on January 23, 2026.

² Respiratory Illnesses Data Channel, <https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/data/index.html>. Last updated on January 23, 2026.

³ European Respiratory Virus Surveillance Summary (ERVISS), <https://erviss.org/>. Accessed on January 28, 2026.