

Highlights¹

The 2023-2024 season runs from August 27, 2023 to August 24, 2024

Activity levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Localized activity was reported in Western and Northern Zones. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Eastern and Central zones. • The number of COVID-19 PCR positives has declined compared to last week. Activity continues to be lower than during the same time period in 2022. • There were fewer RSV cases this week compared to last reporting week.
Laboratory-confirmed cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influenza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There were 173 new cases of Influenza A, and 12 new cases of Influenza B reported during week 52; there have been 499 cases of Influenza A and 28 cases of Influenza B reported since the start of the 2023-2024 season. • COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There were 269 new cases of COVID-19 reported during week 52; there have been 5865 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the start of the 2023-2024 season. • RSV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There were 122 new cases of RSV reported during week 52; there have been 718 laboratory confirmed cases of RSV since the start of the 2023-2024 season.
Severity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influenza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During the 2023-2024 season there have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 83 hospitalizations (non-ICU) • 3 ICU admissions • 4 deaths • COVID-19:² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During the 2023-2024 season there have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 467 hospitalizations (non-ICU) • 32 ICU admissions • 91 deaths
Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 4 new long term care facility outbreaks declared in this reporting period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 influenza ○ 2 COVID-19 ○ 0 RSV
Syndromic surveillance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of emergency department visits for influenza like illness (ILI) was 1.3% during this reporting period.

¹ See Appendix for data notes.

² COVID-19 outcomes data experienced reporting delays for weeks 51-52.

INFLUENZA

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by week (N=527), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia³

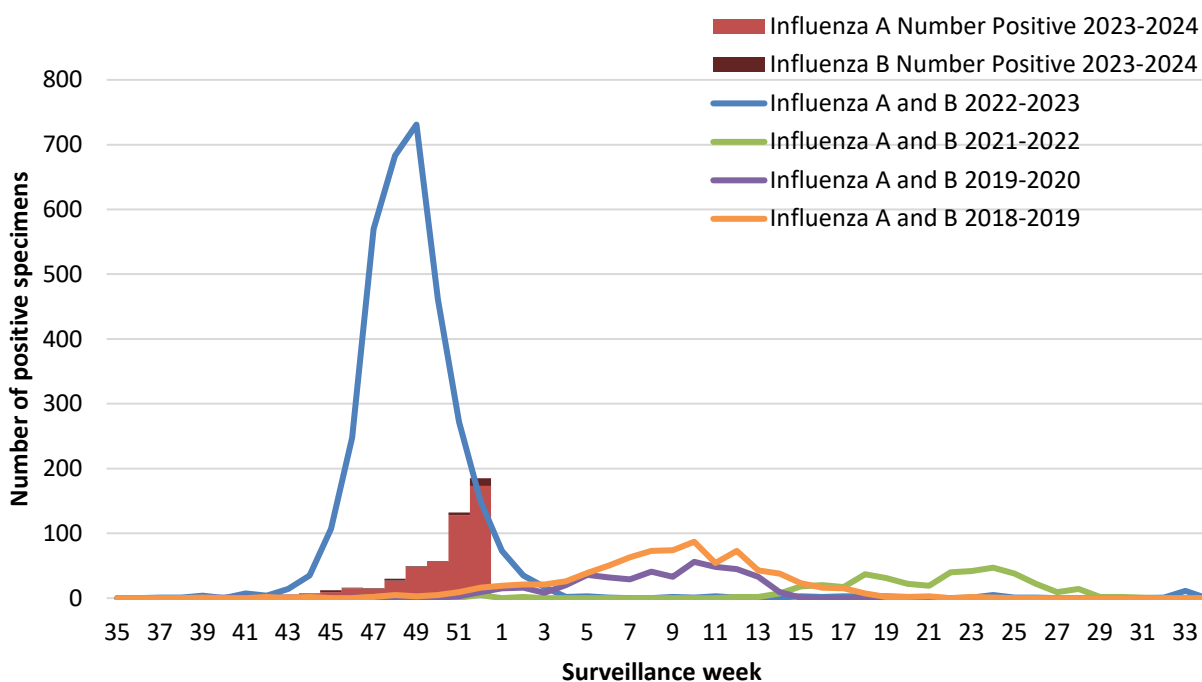


Table 1: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by zone, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁴

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
Western	22	3	25	50	9	59
Northern	73	1	74	201	7	208
Eastern	44	8	52	113	8	121
Central	34	0	34	135	4	139
Nova Scotia Total	173	12	185	499	28	527

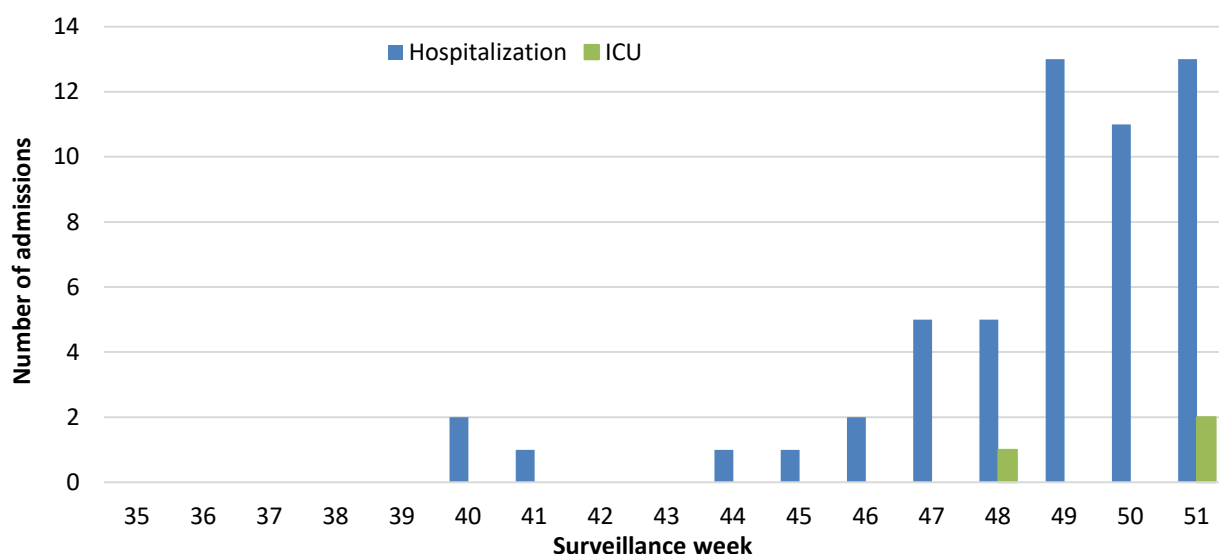
³ There were no reported influenza cases during the 2020-2021 season.

⁴ Influenza case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

Table 2: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
0-4	25	1	26	72	7	79
5-19	12	4	16	68	8	76
20-44	33	4	37	99	7	106
45-64	36	2	38	101	2	103
65+	67	1	68	159	4	163
Nova Scotia Total	173	12	185	499	28	527

Figure 2. Number of influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁵

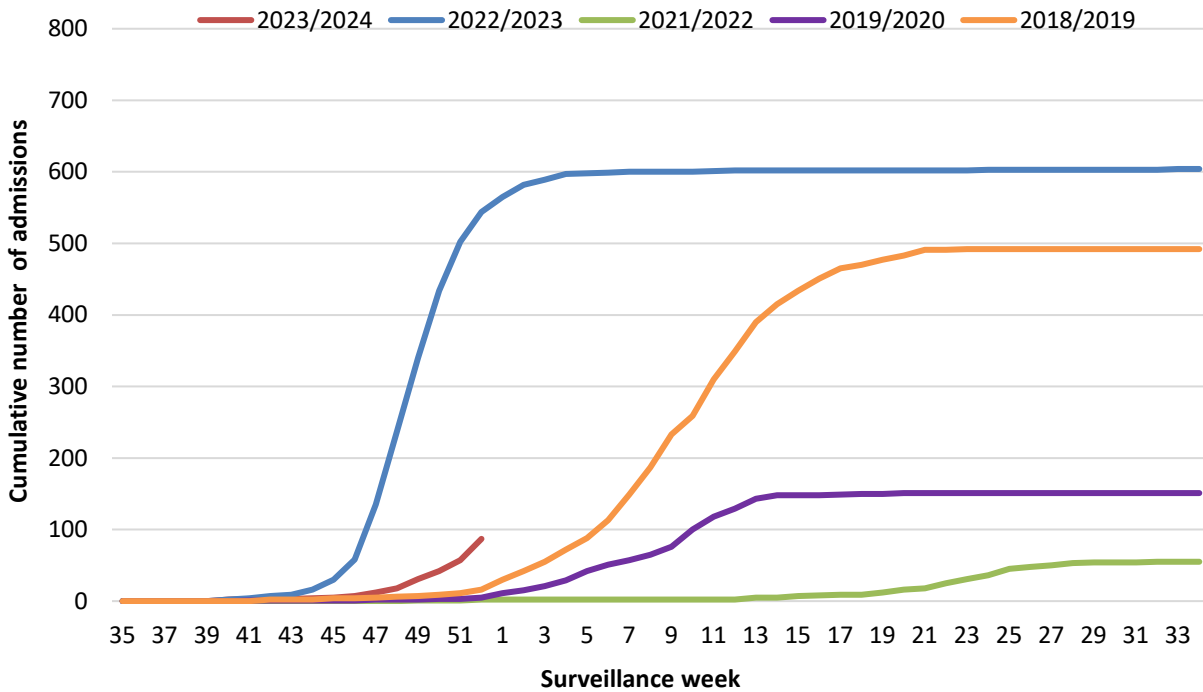


⁵ Due to influenza outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Table 3: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for influenza positive patients, based on most severe outcome, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁶

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	8	0	0
5-19	5	0	0
20-44	7	0	1
45-64	23	1	0
65+	40	2	3
Nova Scotia Total	83	3	4

Figure 3: Cumulative influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia⁷



⁶ In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome.

⁷ There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season.

COVID-19

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by week (N=5865), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous season, Nova Scotia

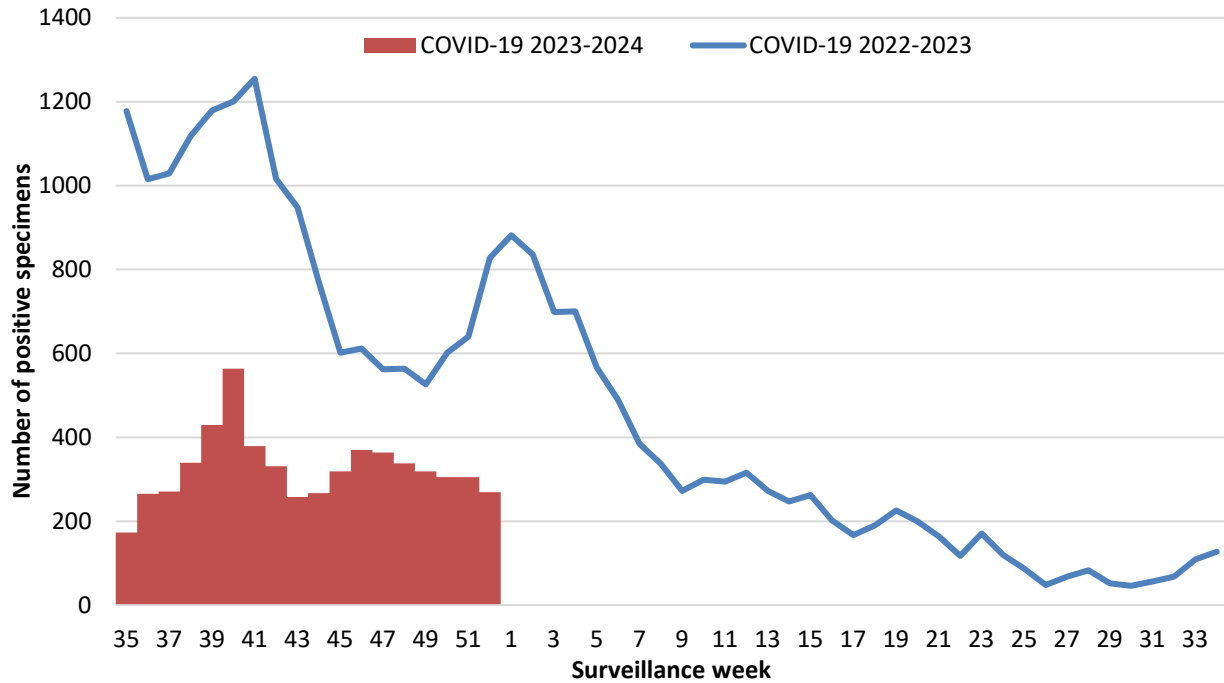


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by zone, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁸

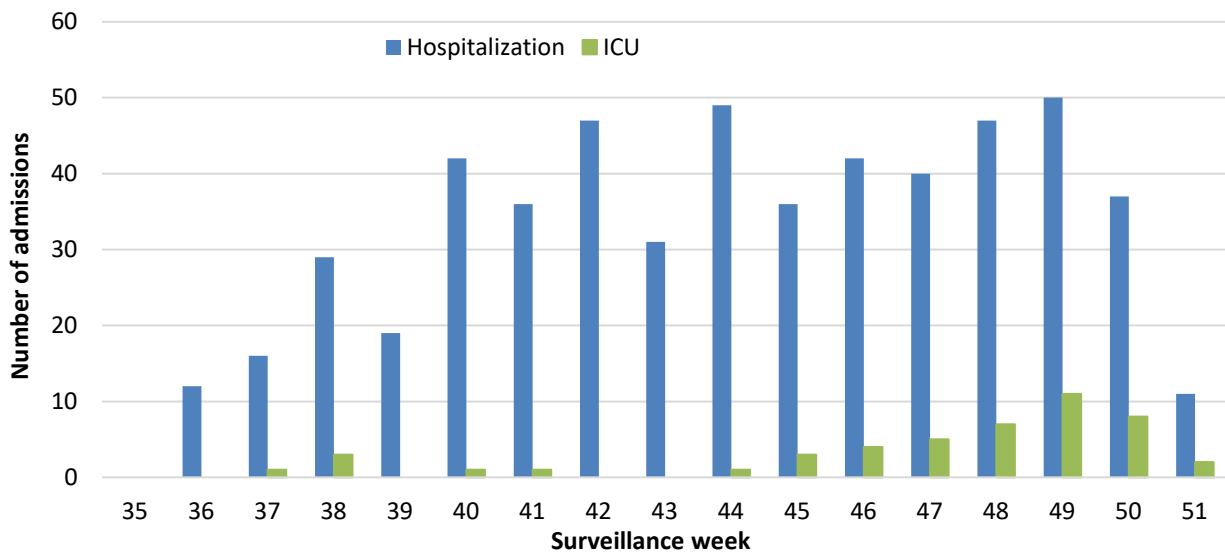
ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Western	55	1308
Northern	44	1151
Eastern	32	996
Central	138	2410
Nova Scotia Total	269	5865

⁸ COVID-19 case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

Table 5. Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by age group, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-4	12	87
5-19	2	79
20-44	36	865
45-64	67	1313
65+	152	3521
Nova Scotia Total	269	5865

Figure 5: Number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁹



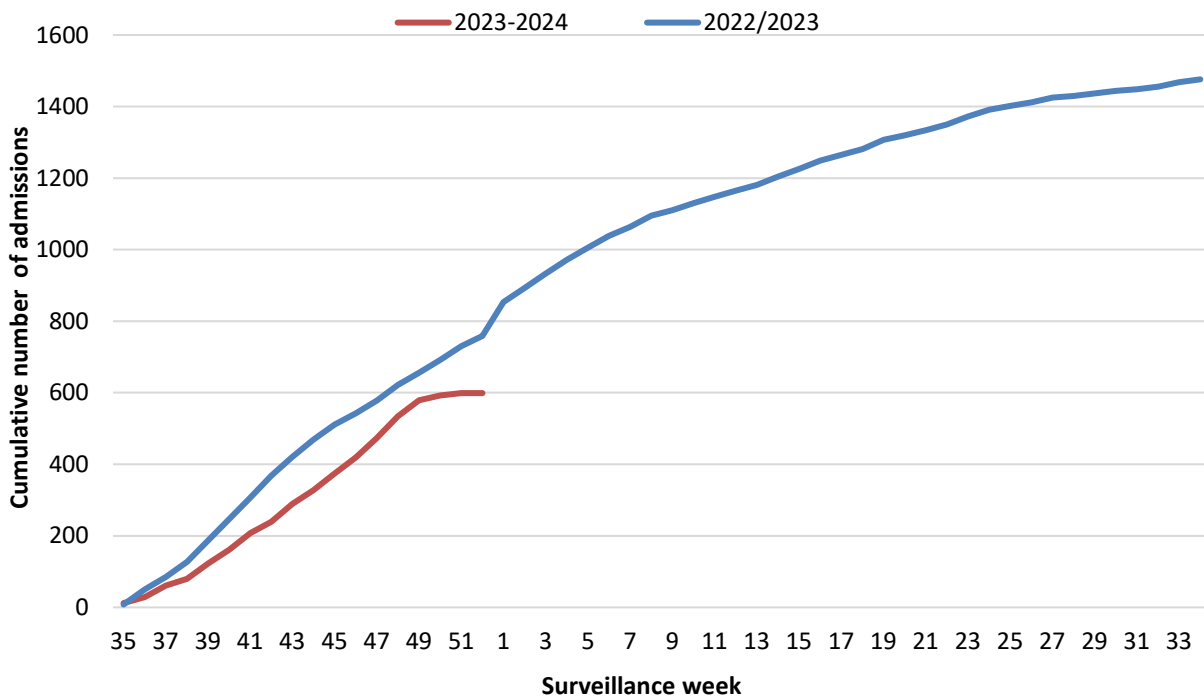
⁹ Due to COVID-19 outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week. There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season. COVID-19 outcomes data experienced reporting delays for weeks 51-52.

Week 52 (December 24, 2023 to December 30, 2023)

Table 6: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for COVID-19 positive patients, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia¹⁰

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	4	0	0
5-19	4	0	0
20-44	13	3	0
45-64	49	10	4
65+	397	19	87
Nova Scotia Total	467	32	91

Figure 6: Cumulative Covid-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia¹¹



¹⁰ In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome. COVID-19 outcome data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified. COVID-19 outcomes data experienced reporting delays for weeks 51-52.

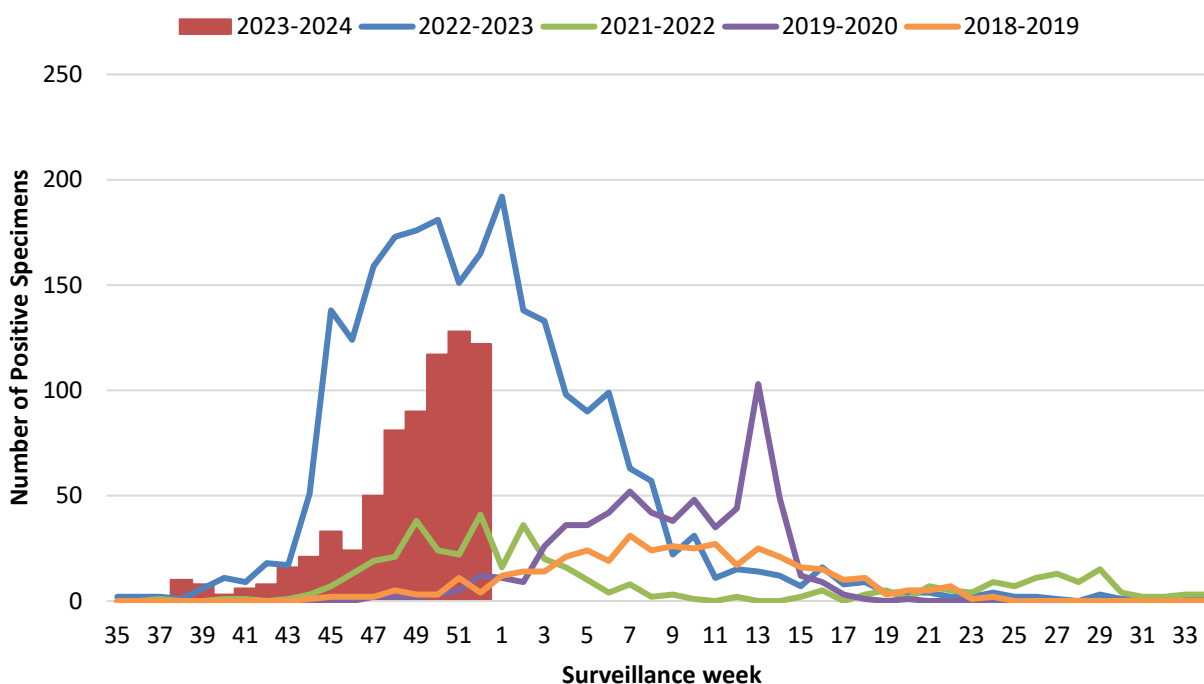
¹¹ COVID-19 outcomes data experienced reporting delays for weeks 51-52.

RSV

Table 7: Number of laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia¹²

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-5 months	29	147
6-11 months	8	42
12-23 months	15	92
2-4 years	20	160
5-19 years	7	52
20-64 years	11	76
65+ years	32	149
Nova Scotia Total	122	718

Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by week (N=718), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹³

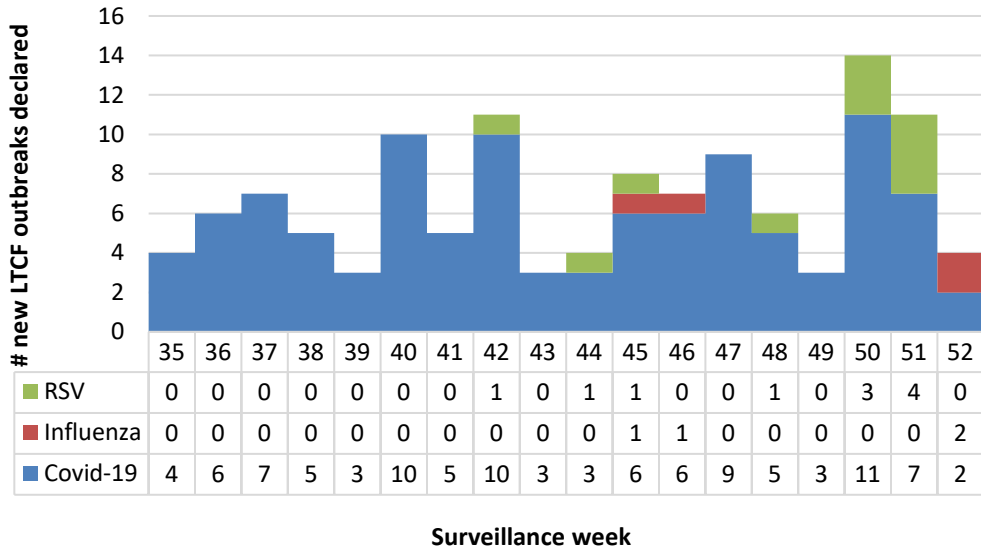


¹² Previous week data adjusted due to delay in data submission.

¹³ There were no reported RSV cases during the 2020-2021 season. There has been a change in testing methods with the implementation of multiplex respiratory virus PCR. This may increase the number of cases detected. Previous week data adjusted due to delay in data submission.

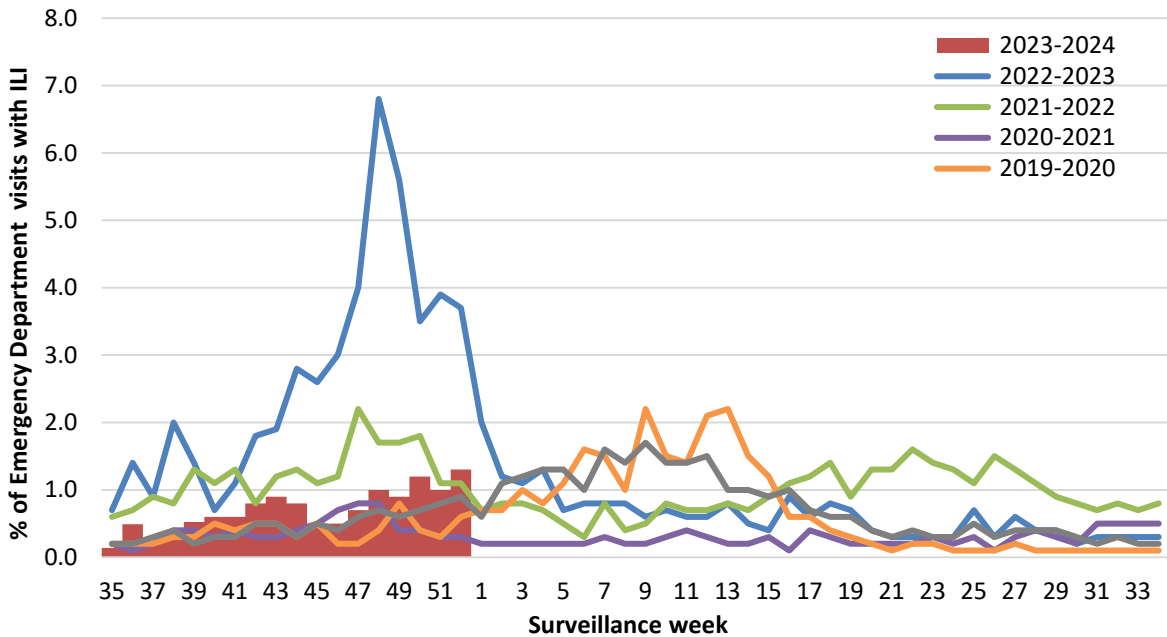
RESPIRATORY OUTBREAKS

Figure 8. Number of new long term care facility respiratory outbreaks by week and respiratory virus (influenza, COVID-19 and RSV), 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia¹⁴



SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE

Figure 9: Percentage of emergency department visits due to ILI by report week, 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia



¹⁴ Outbreak definitions can be found in the Appendix.

OTHER RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

Table 8: Number of positive specimens for other respiratory viruses, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia¹⁵

PATHOGEN	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Adenovirus	2	30
Bocavirus	0	0
Coronavirus*	0	0
Enterovirus/Rhinovirus	3	177
Metapneumovirus	0	2
Parainfluenza	0	27

**Excludes COVID-19*

APPENDIX – DATA NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

¹⁵ Previous week data adjusted due to delay in data submission.

Week 52 (December 24, 2023 to December 30, 2023)

DATA NOTES

- A surveillance week runs from Sunday to Saturday. Nova Scotia's 2023-2024 season is aligned with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) FluWatch surveillance weeks.
 - This year runs from August 27, 2023 (Week 35) to August 24, 2024 (Week 34).
- Notifications of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths may lag; deaths are particularly affected. Additionally, data are incomplete for the most recent week because COVID-19 and influenza outcome reporting from public health occurs on Wednesdays. The most recent surveillance week is not included in graphs showing outcomes by week because of this.
- The definition for a COVID-19 hospitalization was changed in May 2023.
- A case can have more than one outcome (e.g., be hospitalized, and later move to the ICU); multiple outcomes per case are counted in graphs showing outcomes by week, where applicable.
- RSV is not a notifiable disease in Nova Scotia.
- Testing eligibility guidelines and the use of multiplex PCR testing affect the number of cases identified and reported.
 - A multiplex PCR tests for multiple respiratory pathogens simultaneously. Routine multiplex PCR tests include influenza, RSV, and Covid-19.
 - In the 2022-2023 season, Nova Scotia saw increased accessibility to a multiplex PCR testing which likely increased detection in community of Influenza and RSV.
 - Testing is limited to specific populations and the numbers reported here under-represent the true burden of disease in the community.

DEFINITIONS USED IN RESPIRATORY SURVEILLANCE, AND USEFUL LINKS, 2023-2024

See: [Nova Scotia's Respiratory Response Plan](#)

ACRONYM LIST

ICU	Intensive care unit
ILI	Influenza-like illness
RSV	Respiratory syncytial virus

OUTBREAK DEFINITIONS

Lab Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreak

Two or more laboratory-confirmed resident cases, AND at least one is a facility acquired case, with all cases epidemiologically linked within the LTCF in a 10-day period

Lab Confirmed Influenza Outbreak

Two or more resident cases of ILI (influenza-like illness), where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of influenza, within the LTCF in a 7-day period

Lab Confirmed Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Outbreak

Week 52 (December 24, 2023 to December 30, 2023)

Two or more symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of RSV, epidemiologically linked within the LTCF in a 7-day period

ILI CASE DEFINITION

Acute onset of respiratory illness with fever and cough and with one or more of the following – sore throat, arthralgia, myalgia or prostration which is likely due to influenza. In children under 5, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present. In patients under 5 or 65 and older, fever may not be prominent.

NATIONAL FLUWATCH DEFINITIONS FOR INFLUENZA ACTIVITY LEVELS

No activity	No laboratory-confirmed influenza detections in the reporting week, however, sporadically occurring ILI* may be reported
Sporadic	Sporadically occurring ILI* and lab confirmed influenza detection(s) with no outbreaks detected within the influenza surveillance region
Localized	(1) Evidence of increased ILI* and (2) lab confirmed influenza detection(s) together with (3) outbreaks occurring in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in less than 50% of the influenza surveillance region
Widespread	(1) Evidence of increased ILI* and (2) lab confirmed influenza detection(s) together with (3) outbreaks occurring in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in greater than or equal to 50% of the influenza surveillance region

OTHER CASE DEFINITIONS

See: [Surveillance Guidelines | novascotia.ca](#)

LINKS TO OTHER WEEKLY INFLUENZA REPORTS

Canada: [Weekly influenza reports - Canada.ca](#)

World: <https://www.who.int/teams/global-influenza-programme/surveillance-and-monitoring/influenza-updates/current-influenza-update>

US: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly