

Highlights¹

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

Activity levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localized influenza activity was reported in Northern zone. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Eastern, Western and Central zones. COVID-19 PCR positives cases have been declining over the last four weeks.. Activity continues to be lower than during the same time period in 2022. The number of RSV cases have been increasing over the last three reporting weeks.
Laboratory-confirmed cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 48 new cases of Influenza A, and 1 new case of Influenza B reported during week 49; there have been 142 cases of Influenza A and 11 cases of Influenza B reported since the start of the 2023-2024 season. COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 317 new cases of COVID-19 reported during week 49; there have been 4985 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the start of the 2023-2024 season. RSV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 90 new cases of RSV reported during week 49; there have been 351 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"> 30 hospitalizations (non-ICU) 1 ICU admission 1 death COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 2023-2024 season there have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 402 hospitalizations (non-ICU) 7 ICU admissions 80 deaths
Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 3 new long term care facility outbreaks declared in this reporting period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 Influenza 3 COVID-19 0 RSV
Syndromic surveillance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of emergency department visits for influenza like illness (ILI) was 0.9% during this reporting period.

¹ See Appendix for data notes.

INFLUENZA

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by week (N=153), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia²

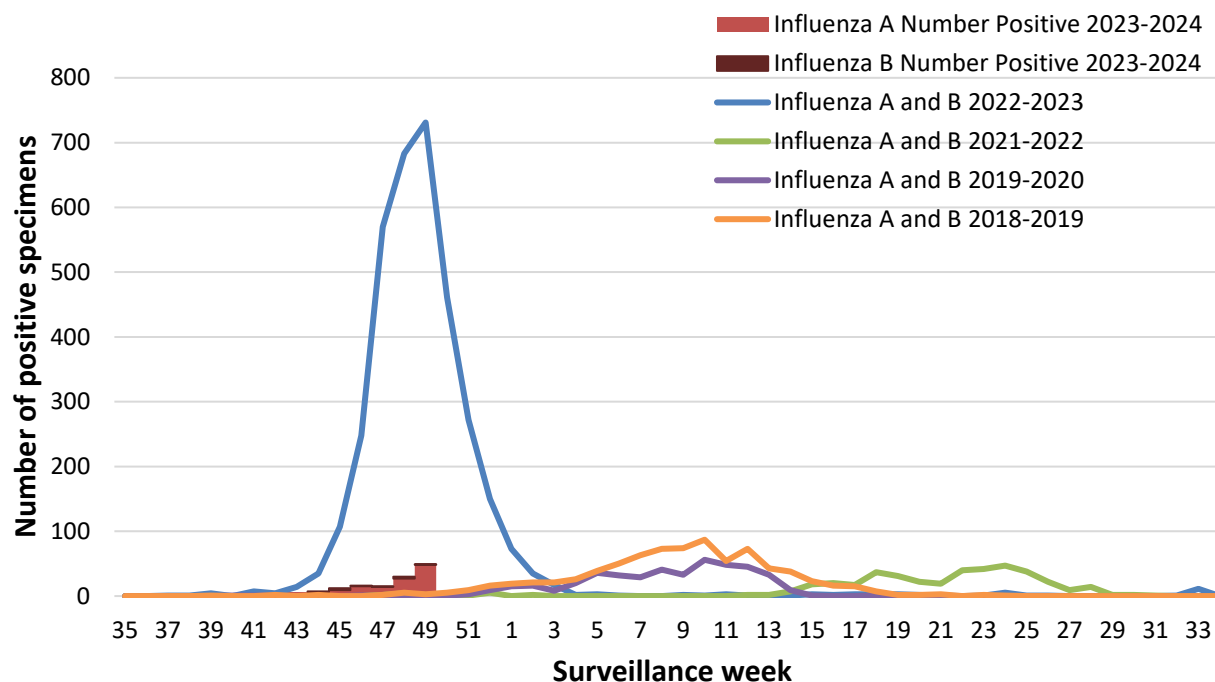


Table 1: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by zone, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia³

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
Western	1	0	1	2	5	7
Northern	20	0	20	62	2	64
Eastern	12	0	12	22	0	22
Central	15	1	16	56	4	60
Nova Scotia Total	48	1	49	142	11	153

² There were no reported influenza cases during the 2020-2021 season.

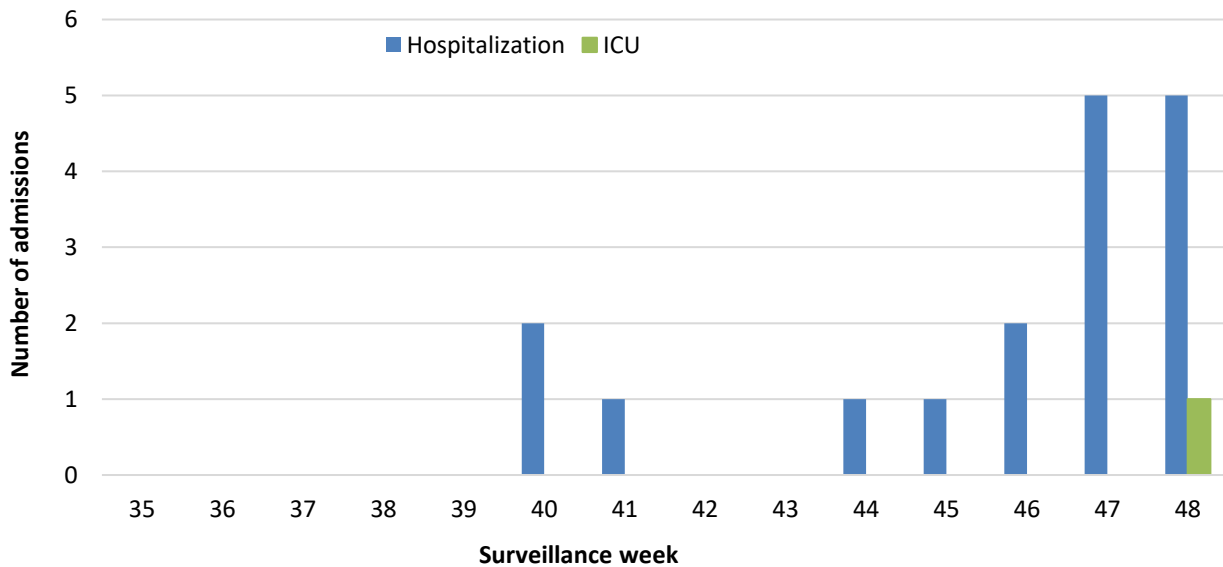
³ Influenza case data are subject to ongoing quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements.

Week 49 (December 03, 2023 to December 09, 2023)

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	12	0	12	23	5	28
5-19	9	1	10	23	3	26
20-44	7	0	7	25	0	25
45-64	10	0	10	28	0	28
65+	10	0	10	43	3	46
Nova Scotia Total	48	1	49	142	11	153

Figure 2. Number of influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁴



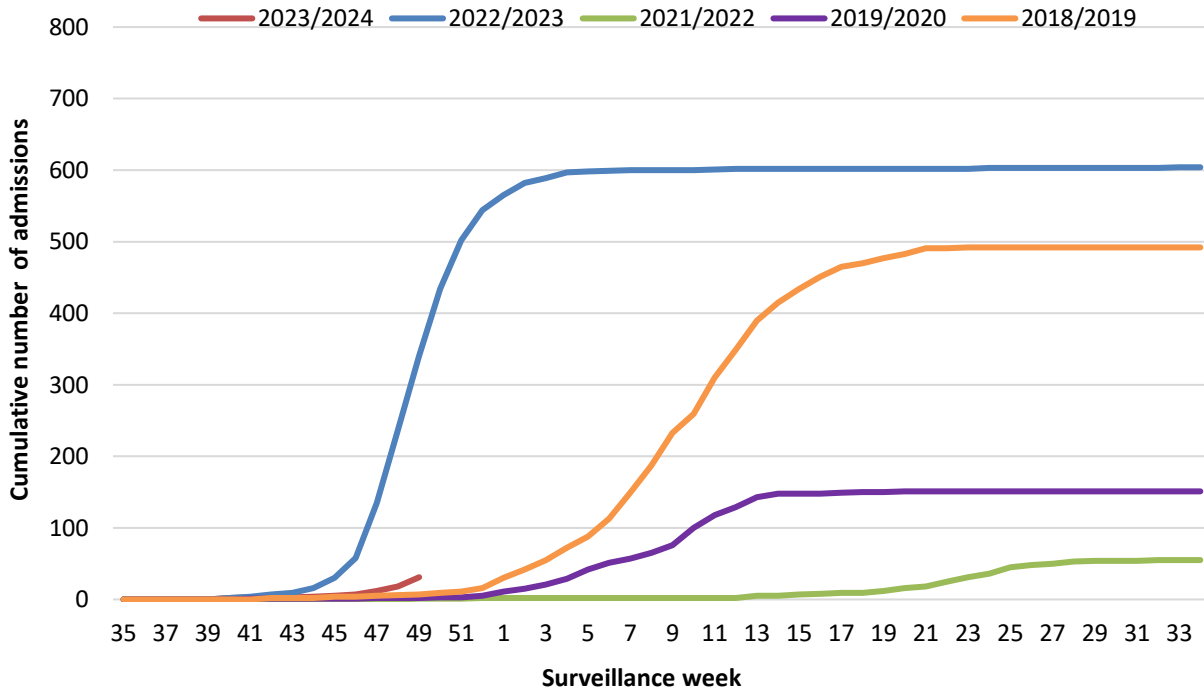
⁴ Due to influenza outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 49 (December 03, 2023 to December 09, 2023)

Table 3: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for influenza positive patients, based on most severe outcome, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁵

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	4	0	0
5-19	3	0	0
20-44	2	0	0
45-64	7	1	0
65+	14	0	1
Nova Scotia Total	30	1	1

Figure 3: Cumulative influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia⁶



⁵ 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. Outcome data is subject to ongoing quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements.

⁶ There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season.

COVID-19

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by week (N=4985), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous season, Nova Scotia

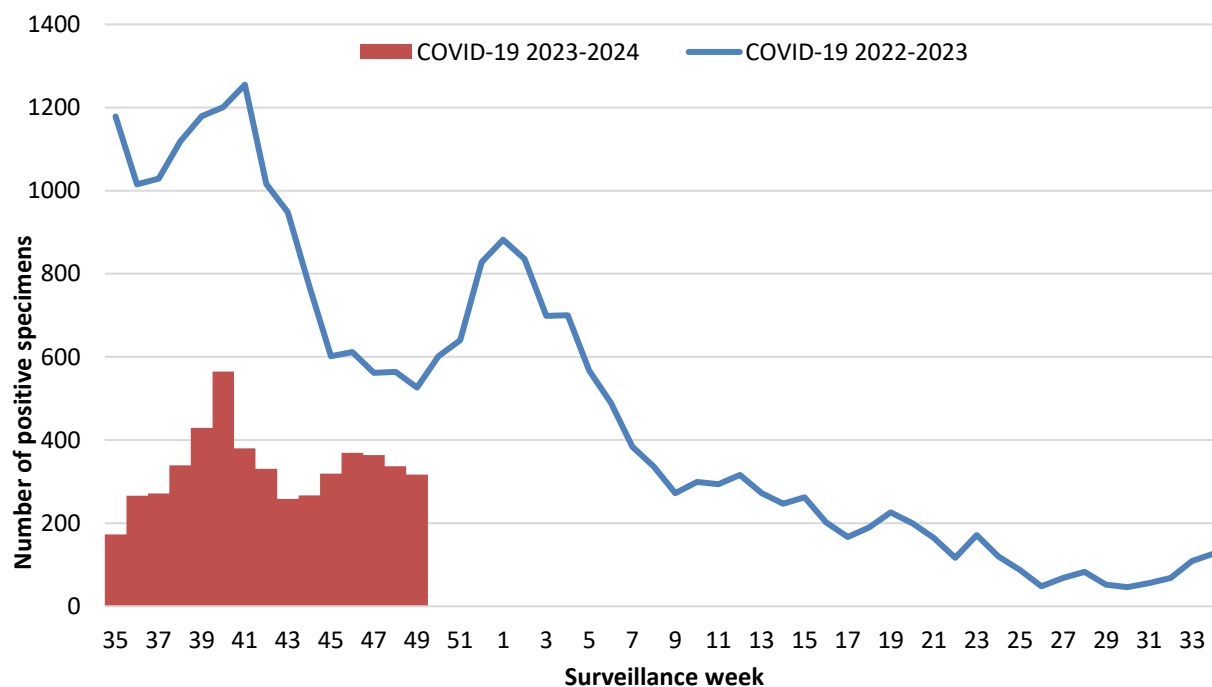


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by zone, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁷

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Western	63	1143
Northern	66	991
Eastern	58	816
Central	130	2035
Nova Scotia Total	317	4985

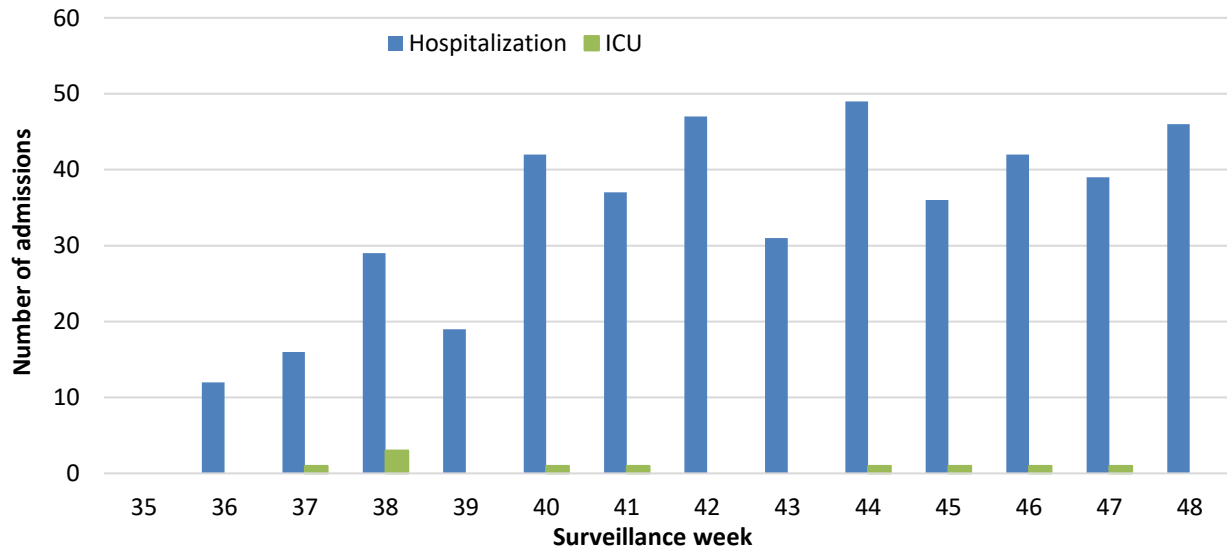
⁷ COVID-19 case data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements. Any labs that belong to people out of province will be removed once out of province status is known.

Week 49 (December 03, 2023 to December 09, 2023)

Table 5. Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by age group, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁸

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-4	8	59
5-19	8	69
20-44	58	739
45-64	71	1111
65+	172	3007
Nova Scotia Total	317	4985

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



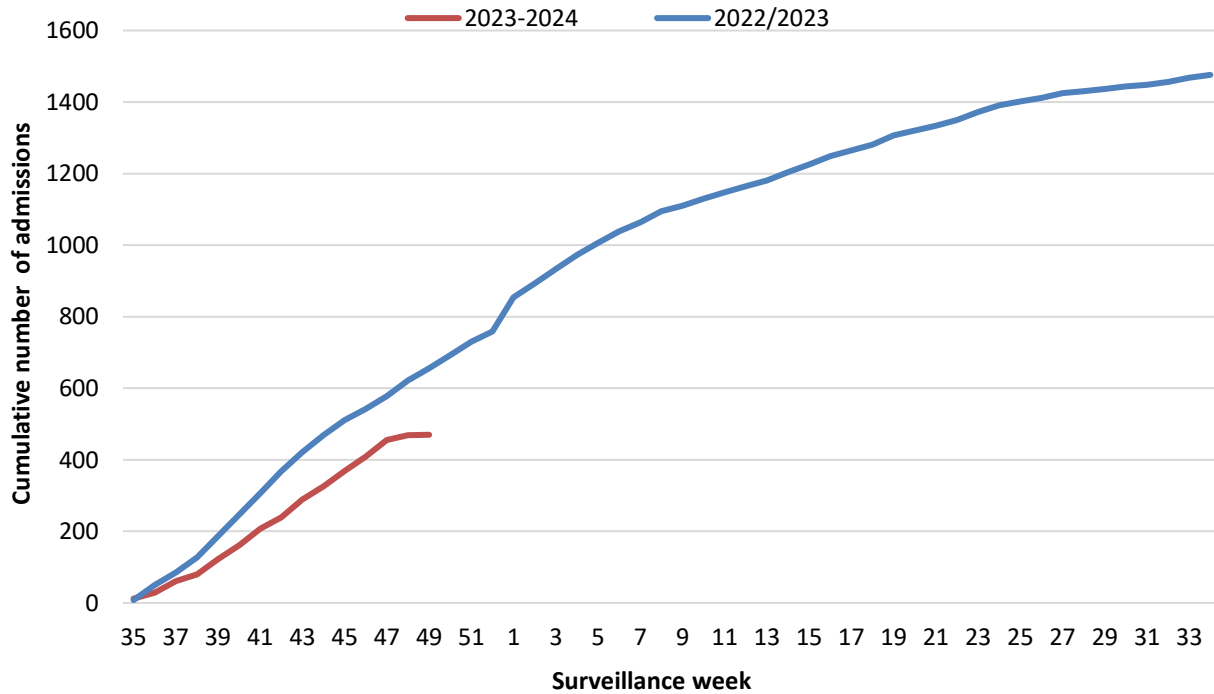
⁸ COVID-19 case data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements. Any labs that belong to people out of province will be removed once out of province status is known.

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.

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	3	0	0
5-19	3	0	0
20-44	11	1	0
45-64	45	2	3
65+	340	4	77
Nova Scotia Total	402	7	80

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



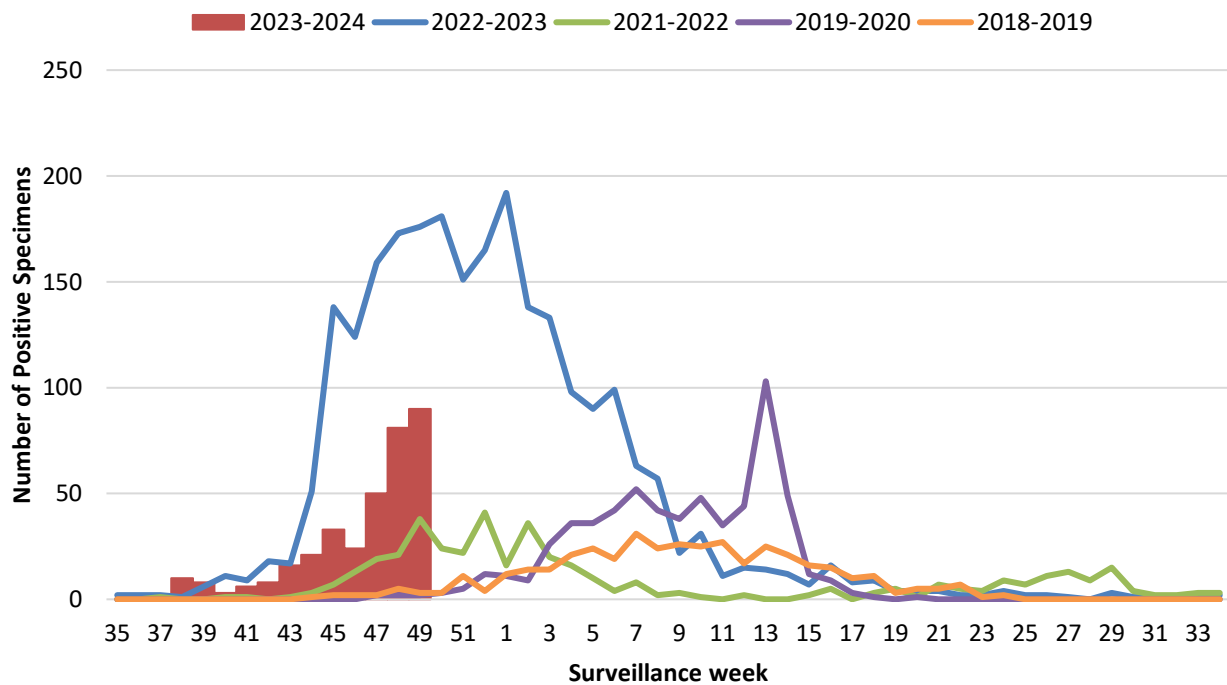
¹⁰ In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome. COVID-19 outcome data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might be modified as we make improvements.

RSV

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

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-5 months	14	71
6-11 months	9	24
12-23 months	16	45
2-4 years	15	89
5-19 years	11	24
20-64 years	6	33
65+ years	19	65
Nova Scotia Total	90	351

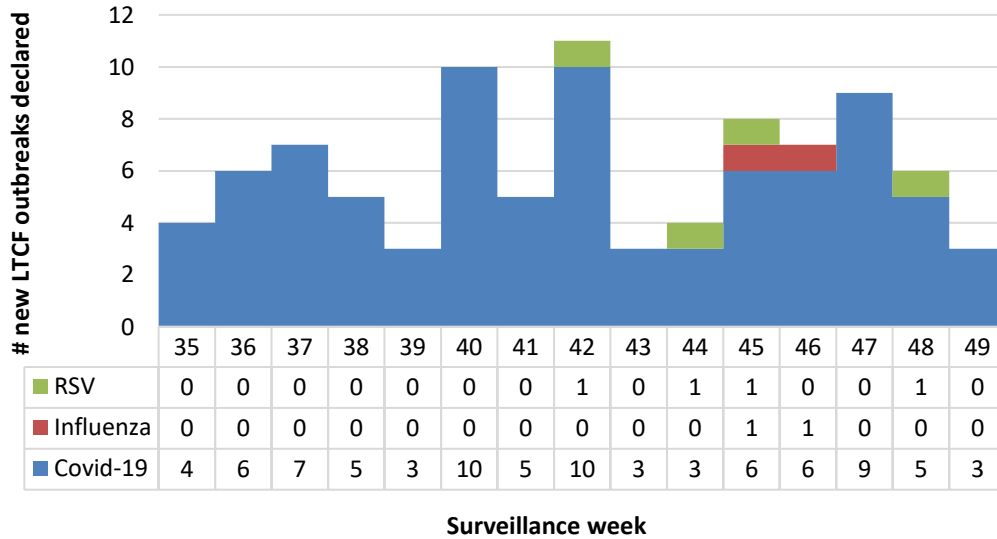
Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by week (N=351), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹¹



¹¹ 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.

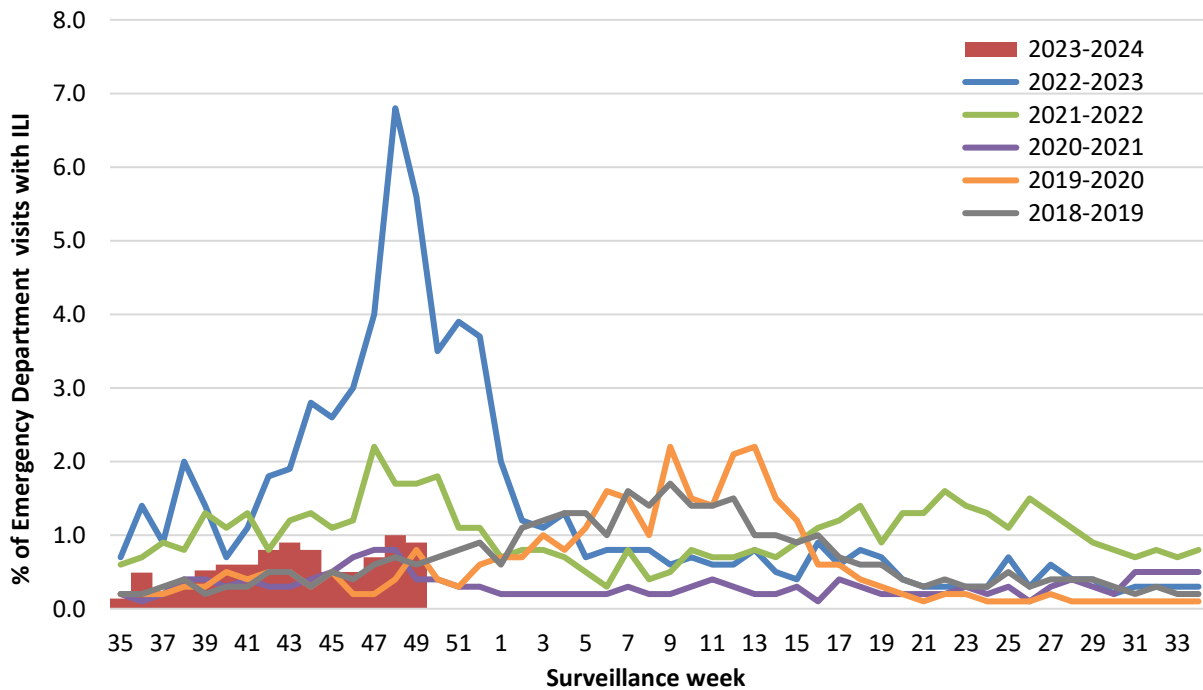
RESPIRATORY OUTBREAKS

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 Scotia¹²



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



¹² 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 Scotia

PATHOGEN	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Adenovirus	1	24
Bocavirus	0	0
Coronavirus*	0	0
Enterovirus/Rhinovirus	2	166
Metapneumovirus	0	2
Parainfluenza	0	27

**Excludes COVID-19*

APPENDIX – DATA NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

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

Week 49 (December 03, 2023 to December 09, 2023)

Lab Confirmed Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Outbreak

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](https://www.novascotia.ca/health-services/flu-surveillance-guidelines)

LINKS TO OTHER WEEKLY INFLUENZA REPORTS

Canada: [Weekly influenza reports - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-services/flu-surveillance-reports)

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

US: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly