

WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGIST REPORT

February 12, 2024



**Central
Connecticut
Health
District**

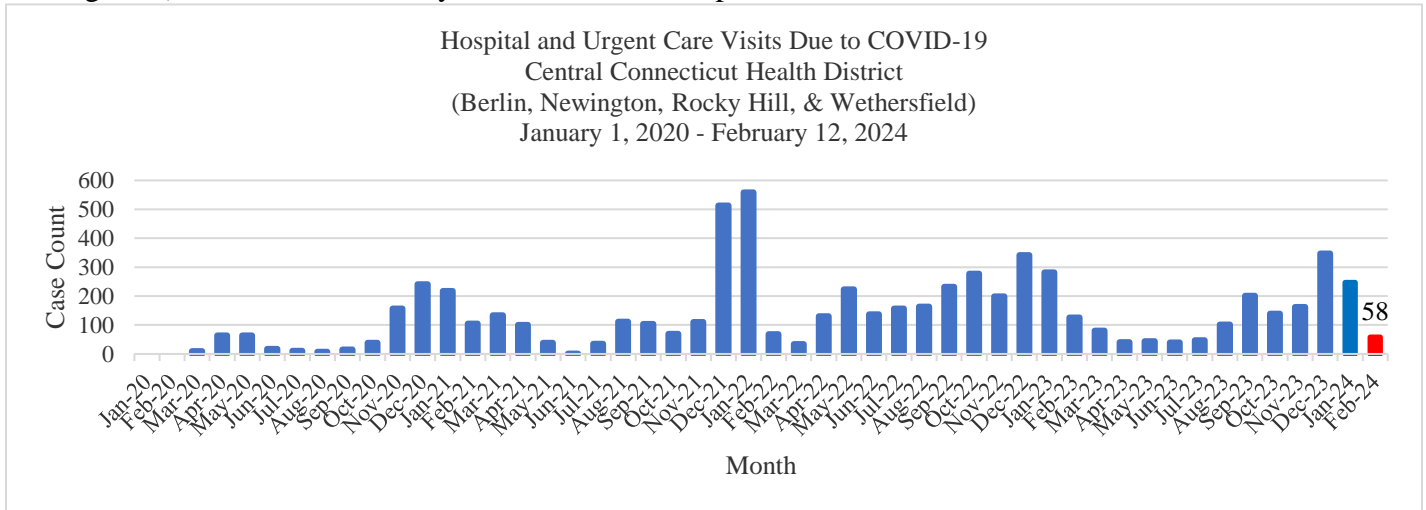
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EPIDEMIOLOGIST, Central Connecticut Health District

RESPIRATORY VIRAL SEASON

Case numbers for COVID-19, influenza and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in our district continue to subside. Visit www.ccthd.org for an interactive graph on respiratory illness in our district. Remember, if you are sick stay home to prevent the spread of germs to others.

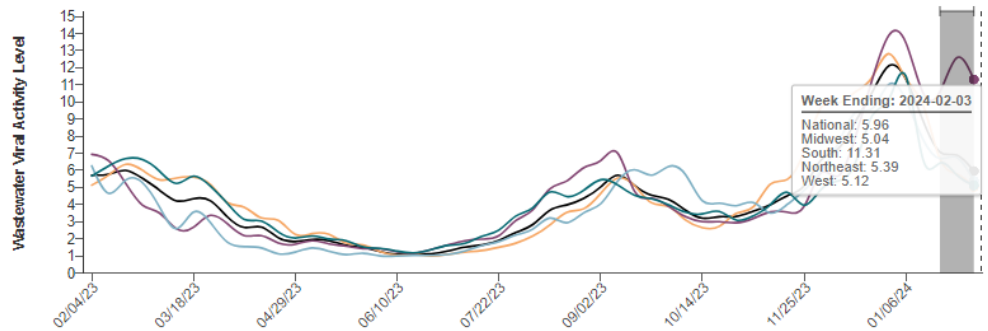
COVID-19 SURVEILLANCE

Data for COVID-19 is as of February 12, 2024 from EpiCenter. The bar graph below illustrates the syndromic surveillance of hospital and urgent care visits due to COVID-19 (those experiencing symptoms with a COVID-19 diagnosis) in our district. Thirty-seven cases were reported between 2/6/24-1/12/24.



COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance

As of February 3, 2024, the nationwide wastewater viral activity level for COVID-19 is currently **high** at a level of 5.6 (-1.3 from previous reporting period) (see the black line in the figure to the right) along with the Northeast region with a level of 5.4 (-1.2 from previous reporting week) (blue line). Connecticut has paused wastewater surveillance until capacity at the State Public Health Laboratory has increased and additional water management facilities are onboarded to the Connecticut Wastewater Surveillance Program.

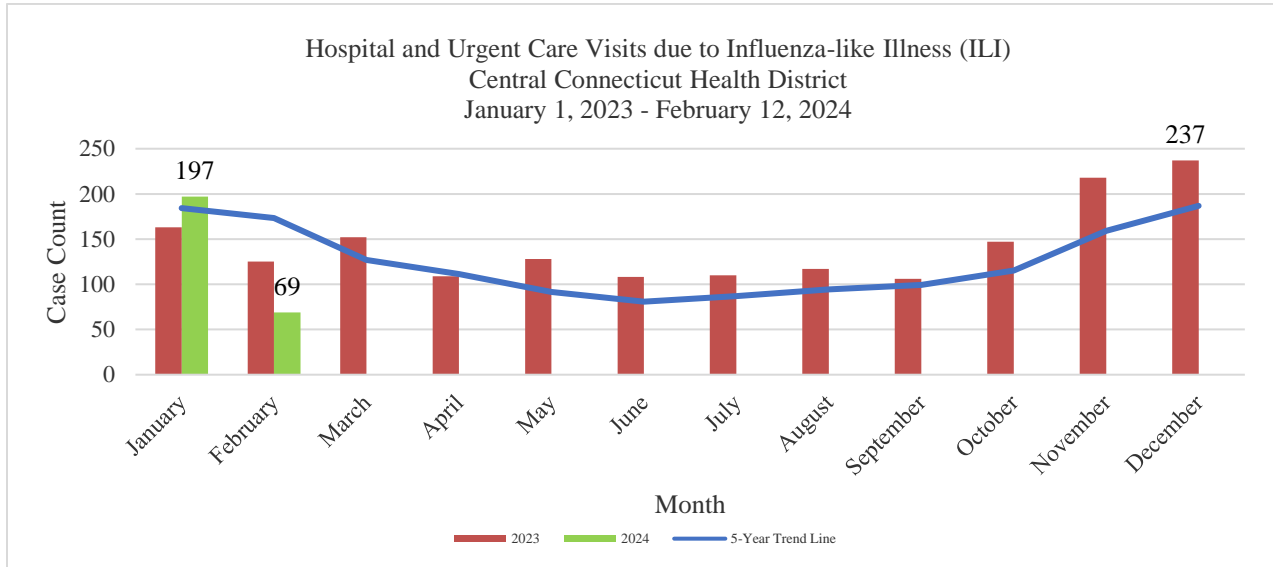


For more information on wastewater surveillance please visit : <https://www.cdc.gov/nwss/rv/COVID19-nationaltrend.html>

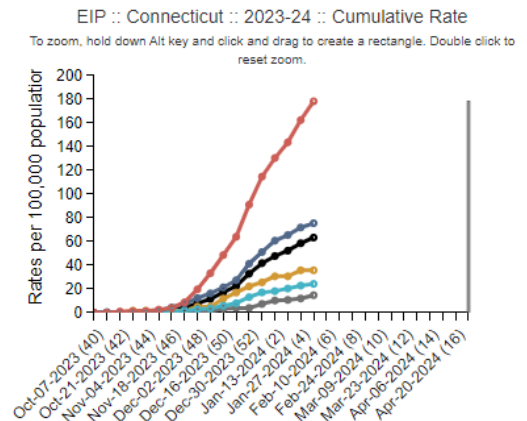
In the Northeast, the predominant variant sequenced in wastewater is JN.1. There is currently no evidence that JN.1 presents an increased risk to public health relative to other circulating variants (CDC).

INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE

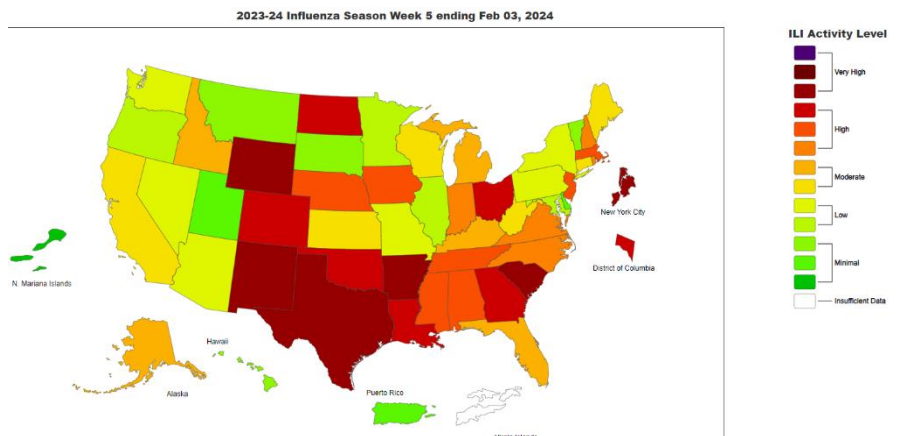
Data for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) is as of February 12, 2024 from EpiCenter. The graph below is the syndromic surveillance of hospital and urgent care visits due to ILI five-year average trend line (2018-2022) compared to this year and last year's cases. Other circulating respiratory viruses can present as influenza-like illness. ILI is defined as having a fever and a cough or sore throat. Forty-one cases of ILI were reported during the week of 2/6/24-2/15/24.



In Connecticut, the majority of those hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed influenza are those who are 65 years of age or older (178.3 per 100,000 population – red line) followed by those who are 50-64 years of age (75.5 per 100,000 population- blue line) and those who are 0-4 years of age (35.8 per 100,000 population- yellow line). Overall 63.4 per 100,000 people in Connecticut have been hospitalized due to influenza (black line). Data was last updated on February 3rd. The figure to the right can be found at <https://gis.cdc.gov/GRASP/Fluview/FluHospRates.html>



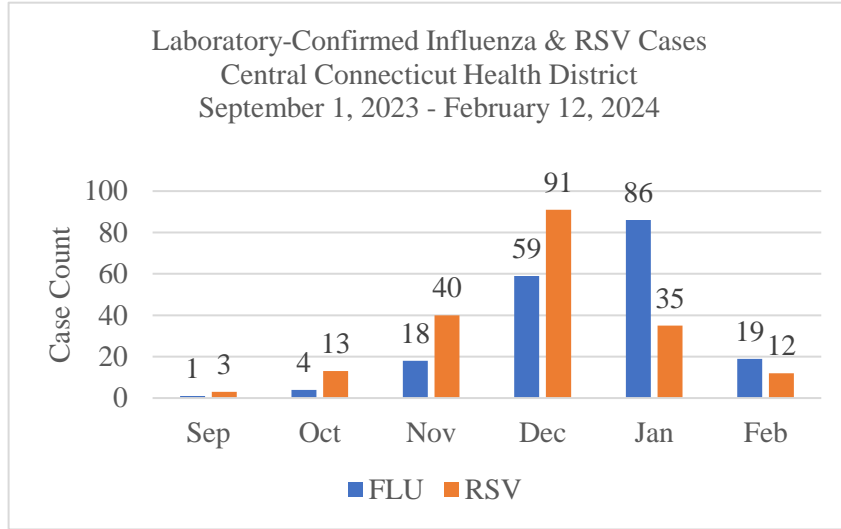
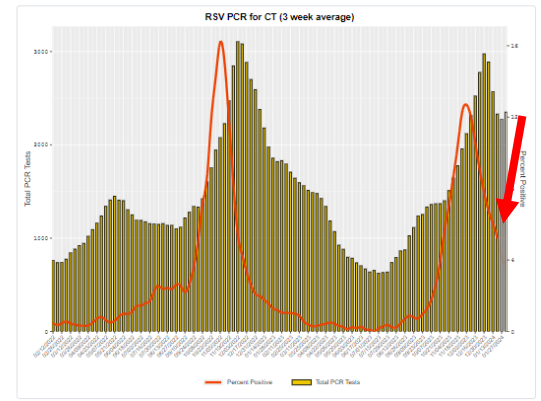
The CDC's FLUView Interactive Map <https://gis.cdc.gov/grasp/fluview/main.html> is a system that monitors visits for respiratory illness that includes fever plus a cough or sore throat (ILI), not laboratory-confirmed influenza and may capture patient visits due to other respiratory pathogens that cause similar symptoms. Connecticut's ILI Activity Level remains at the MODERATE level as of February 3rd.



RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

Nationally RSV positivity is on the downward trend. In Connecticut, RSV PCR test positivity (red line) is following suit as of February 8th (see bar graph to the right).

Total PCR Tests

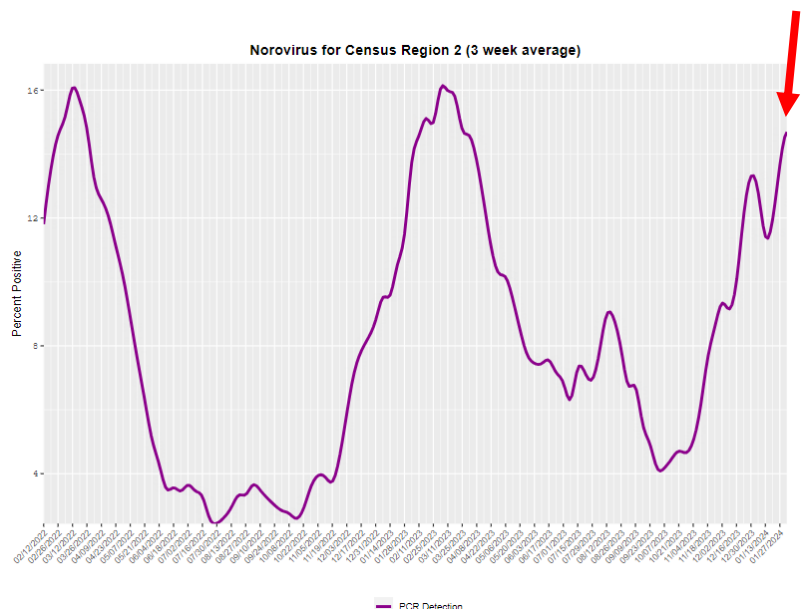


Our district was notified of 187 (+15) laboratory-confirmed of influenza (96% type A, 2% type B, and 2% unknown), and 194 (+3) laboratory-confirmed cases of RSV in the CTEDSS database (see figure to the left) since September 1, 2023.

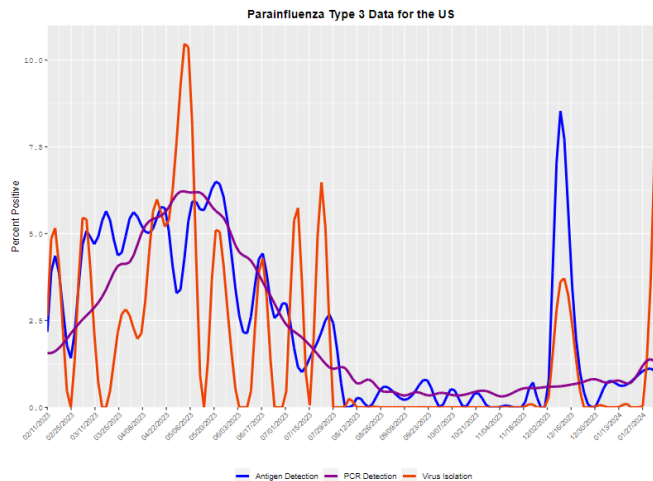
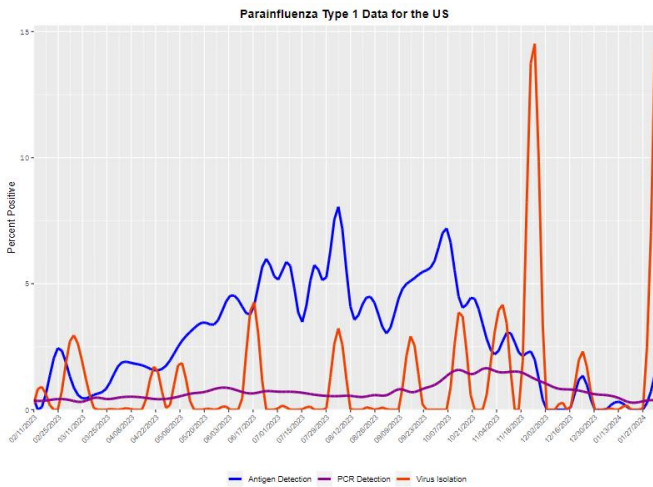
NATIONAL RESPIRATORY & ENTERIC VIRUS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (NREVSS)

The National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) is a laboratory-based system that monitors temporal and geographic circulation patterns (patterns occurring in time and place) of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), human parainfluenza viruses (HPIV), human metapneumovirus (HMPV), respiratory adenoviruses, human coronavirus, and gastrointestinal viruses: rotavirus, and norovirus. Participating laboratories report weekly to CDC the total number of tests performed that week, and the number of those tests that were positive. Middlesex and Yale are the only contributing health organizations in Connecticut that report respiratory and enteric virus surveillance data to the CDC. Data from NREVSS was updated February 1, 2024.

Norovirus test positivity continues to increase in the Northeast (14.7%). The figure to the right illustrates the three week average percent positivity since February 12, 2022. CCHD will continue to conduct surveillance and report on significant trends. Norovirus is the leading cause of vomiting and diarrhea, and foodborne illness in the United States. People of all ages can get infected and sick with norovirus, which spreads very easily and quickly. It's important to wash hands thoroughly after using the bathroom and if you are infected with norovirus thoroughly clean surfaces with an EPA-registered disinfecting product against norovirus. Norovirus can survive on surfaces for two weeks.



Nationally, human-parainfluenza virus (HPIV) types 1 & 3 percent positivity have increased substantially for virus isolation in hospital laboratory specimens. See figures below. Upper respiratory illness from any HPIV is generally common cold symptoms, though some can cause more serious illness. HPIV-1 is most often associated with croup in children. HPIV-3 is more often associated with bronchiolitis, bronchitis, and pneumonia.



Seasonal coronavirus CoVOC43 test positivity has increased to 5.3% while CoVHku1, CoVNL63 and CoV229E remain below 1.5%. Adenovirus, rotavirus and human metapneumovirus detection data appear to show no concerning increases; all test positivity data as of February 8, 2024 is under 5%.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent the spread of infectious respiratory or gastrointestinal illness is to:

- Cover your cough and sneezes,
- **Wash your hands often.**
- Get vaccinated,
- Stay home when you are ill,
- Wear a mask in crowded places,
- Minimize close contact with sick people,
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals, and
- Stay hydrated.



FOOD RECALLS

The following foods are being recalled because they are contaminated. Please check your cupboards and throw out any of these items:

New this week:

- Chicken Street Taco Kit, by Stater Bros Market and Save Mart for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Mexican Style Street Corn Bites by The Perfect Bite Co. for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.
- Fresh Express Salsa Ensalada Kit, Marketside Southwest Chopped Salad Kit by Fresh Express for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Chicken Taco Kits and Meals by Alberstons, Safeway, Eagle, Carrs-Safeway, Pavilions, Vons, Randalls, Tom Thumb, Shaw's, Star Market and Lucky for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Salad kits by Dole, Marketside and Presidents Choice for *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Torta Sandwiches by Fresh and Ready, Sprig and Sprout, Jack and Olive for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Marketside Bacon Ranch Crunch Salad by Marketside Taylor Fresh Foods for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Bacon Ranch Crunch Chopped Salad Kit by Braga Fresh for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Chicken Enchiladas Verde, Cilantro Salad Dressing, Elote Chopped Salad Kit, and Southwest Salad by Trader Joe's for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Fresh mex Chopped kit and Queso Crunch Salad Kit by Ready Pac Bistro for *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Bright Farms Southwest Chipotle Crunch Kit salad kit by BrightFarms, Inc for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Black bean 6 Layer Dip by Rojo's Simply Fresh LLC. For potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Cheese, yogurt, and sour cream by Rizo Brothers California Creamery expanded recall for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination

Previously reported:

- Sam Sung Soy Bean Sprouts by Nam & Son for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination
- Quaker Chewy Dippys Llama Rama bars and more by The Quaker Oats Company for potential Salmonella contamination
- Robitussin Honey CF Max Day and Nighttime cough for microbial contamination
- Spinach and Salad Kits by BrightFarms for possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.
- Aged Cojita Mexican Grating Cheese by Rizo Bros California Creamery, Rizo Lopez Foods, Inc. for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.
- Multiple brand names Cereal, bars, and snacks by The Quaker Oats Company for potential for Salmonella contamination

For more information on recalls due to undeclared allergens please visit: <https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts>

Listeriosis



Listeria monocytogenes is a bacterium that causes listeriosis. Listeriosis is a serious infection. Nationally, an estimated 1,600 people get listeriosis per year, and about 260 die (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). Listeriosis is most likely to sicken pregnant women and their newborns, adults aged 65 years or older, and people with weakened immune systems.

In pregnant women, listeriosis can cause pregnancy loss, premature birth, or a life-threatening infection to newborns. Symptoms of listeriosis usually start within two weeks after eating food contaminated with *L. monocytogenes* but may start as early as the same day or as late as 10 weeks after. General symptoms for listeriosis include fever, muscle aches, and tiredness. Those infected may also experience headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, or seizures.

Queso Fresco and Cotija Cheese made by Rizo-Lopez Foods, and products with their cheeses, crema, and yogurts are being recalled. The investigation for this listeriosis outbreak started February 6th. As of February 8th twenty-six illnesses, 23 hospitalizations, and two deaths have been reported. Recalled products were distributed nationwide. Eleven states have reported illnesses of listeriosis; however, the true number of sick people is likely higher than the number reported because some people recover without medical care and are not tested for *L. monocytogenes*. Connecticut has no positive listeriosis cases reported thus far.



For more information regarding the food recall and listeriosis please visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/cheese-02-24/index.html>

Do not forget to follow Central Connecticut Health District on social media!

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/ccthd4/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CCTHD>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/centralcthealthdistrict/>

The Central Connecticut Health District is committed to improving the quality of life in our communities through prevention of disease and injury, fostering of a healthy environment, and promotion of the health of our residents.