

# WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGIST REPORT

March 18, 2024

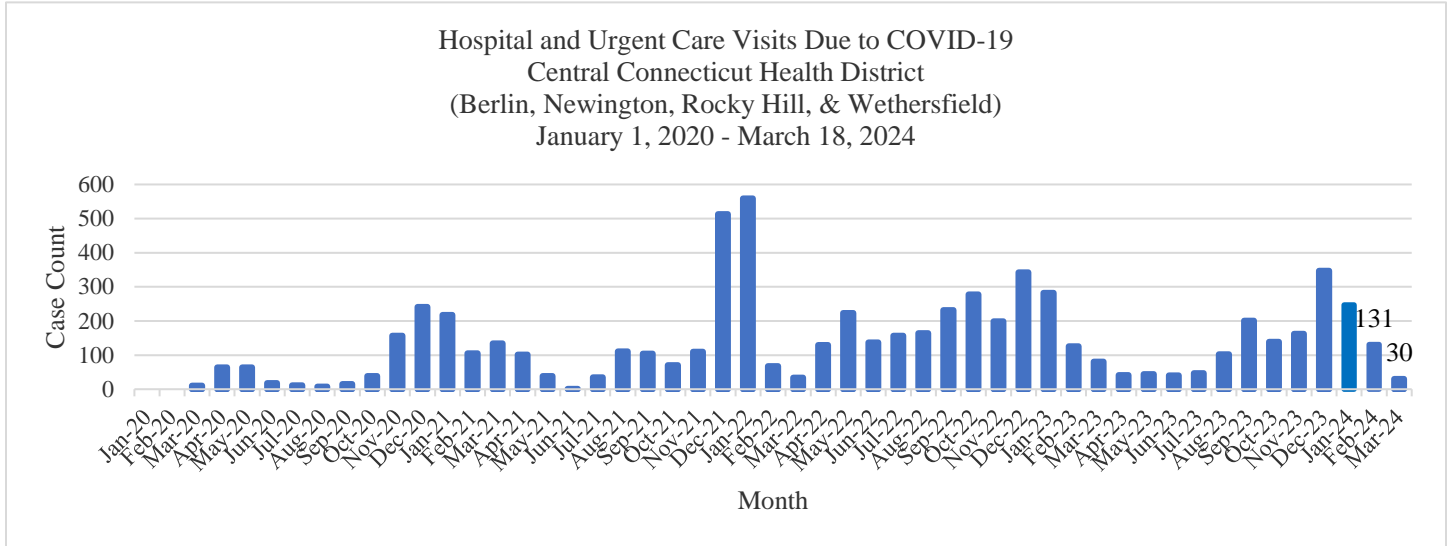


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# RESPIRATORY VIRAL SEASON

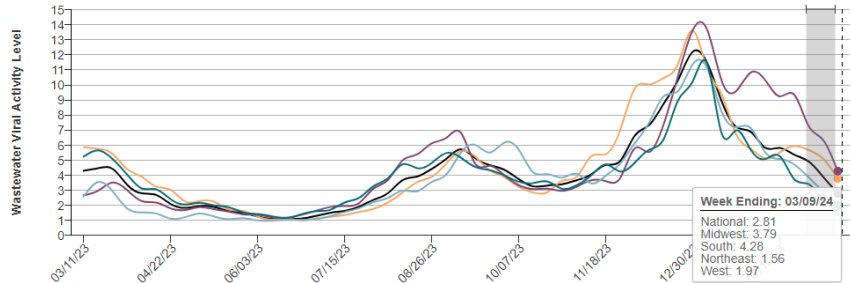
## COVID-19 SURVEILLANCE

Data for COVID-19 is as of March 18, 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. Seventeen cases were reported between 3/12/24-3/18/24.



## COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance

As of March 15, 2024, the nationwide wastewater viral activity level for COVID-19 has dropped to a low level of 2.81 (-.98 from previous reporting period) (see the black line in the figure to the right). The Northeast remains low (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.

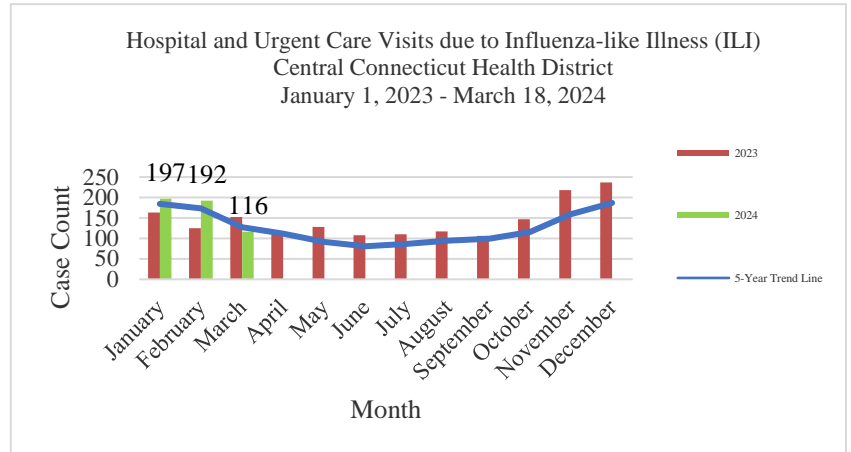


For more information on wastewater surveillance please visit : <https://www.cdc.gov/nwss/rv/COVID19-nationaltrend.html>

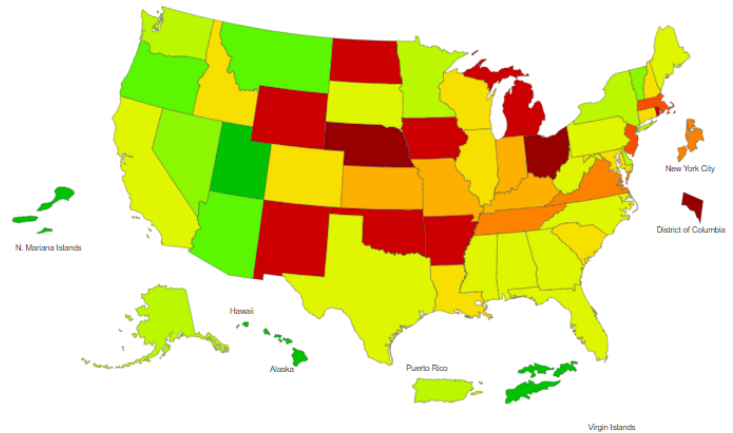
Nationally and in the Northeast, the predominant variant sequenced in wastewater is JN.1. There is currently no evidence that JN.1 presents an increased risk to public health relative to other circulating variants (CDC).

## INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE

Data for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) is as of March 18, 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. Fifty-two cases of ILI were reported during the week of 3/12/24-3/18/24.

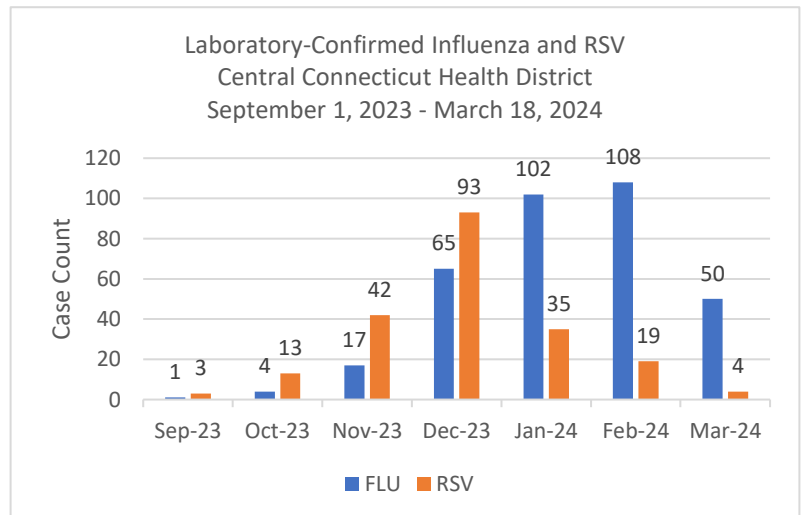


The CDC's FLUView Interactive Map <https://gis.cdc.gov/grasp/fluview/main.html> is a system that monitors visits for respiratory illness that includes fever plus a cough or sore throat (ILI), not laboratory-confirmed influenza and may capture patient visits due to other respiratory pathogens that cause similar symptoms. Connecticut's ILI Activity Level remains at the MODERATE level as of March 9, 2024.



## RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

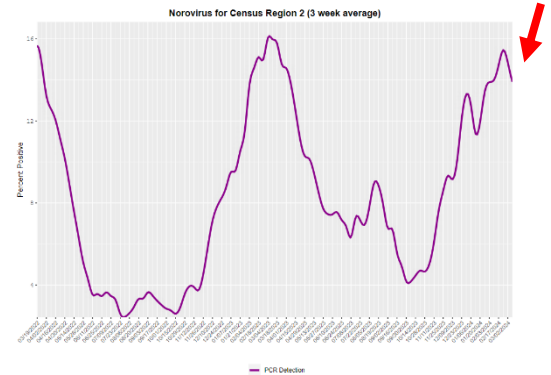
Nationally RSV positivity continues on the downward trend, as well as in the state of Connecticut according to the NRVES. The district was notified of 347 (+1) laboratory-confirmed of influenza (91% type A, 7% type B, and 2% unknown), and 208 laboratory-confirmed cases of RSV (+1) in the CTEDSS database (see figure to the right) since September 1, 2023. Typically in the Spring, we tend to see a drop off in the type A flu, and an increase in type B. CCHD is noticing an increase in the number of laboratory-confirmed cases that are influenza type B.



## 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 March 14, 2024.*

**Norovirus test positivity took a little dip in the Northeast down to 13.9%.** The figure to the right illustrates the three week average percent positivity since March 19, 2022. 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. The district has also seen increase in gastrointestinal outbreaks associated with norovirus in the community.



**Nationally, HPIV 3 viral isolation positivity has doubled to 22.2%.** HPIV 3 is more often associated with bronchiolitis, bronchitis, and pneumonia. HPIV is spread by direct contact with infectious droplets or by airborne spread when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. HPIV usually survive a few hours on surfaces depending on environmental conditions.

**Nationally, adenovirus virus isolation remains elevated at 11.1%.** Adenoviruses most commonly cause respiratory illness. The illnesses can range from the common cold to pneumonia, croup, and bronchitis. Depending on the type, adenoviruses can cause other illnesses such as gastroenteritis, conjunctivitis, cystitis, and, less commonly, neurological disease.

Seasonal coronaviruses have decreased overall and test positivity remains under 3%. Rotavirus and human metapneumovirus detection data appear to show no concerning increases.

## PREVENTION

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

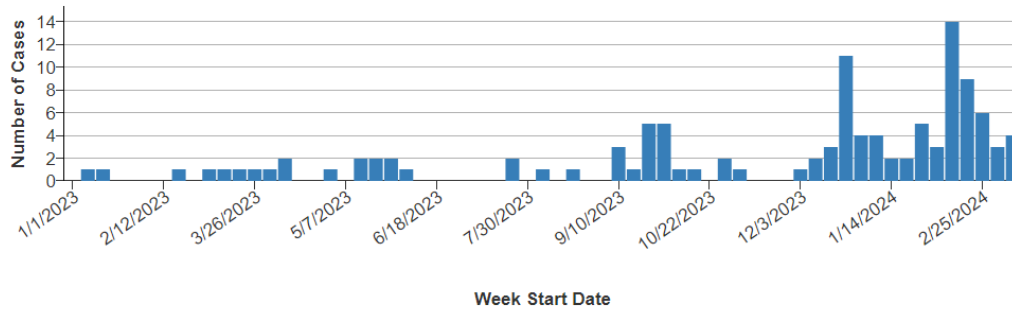
- Cover your cough and sneezes,
- **Wash your hands often,**
- Get vaccinated,
- Stay home when you are ill,
- Wear a mask in crowded places,
- Minimize close contact with sick people,
- Frequently clean and disinfect high touch surfaces,
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals, and
- Stay hydrated.

## MEASLES

As of March 14, 2024, a total of 58 (+13 more cases from last reporting period) measles cases were reported in 17 States: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York City, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington since January 1, 2024.

### Number of measles cases reported by week

2023-2024\* (as of March 14, 2024)



Measles is a highly contagious virus that can lead to serious health complications. Measles is a vaccine preventable disease. If you are unsure of your vaccination status, contact your doctor or go to the State of Connecticut’s Immunization Information System to access your vaccine records at [www.ctwizpublicportal.dph.ct.gov](http://www.ctwizpublicportal.dph.ct.gov) . If you need help getting you or a family member up-to-date with vaccinations, please contact (860)785-8380 x 216. For more information on measles please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/index.html>

## TICK-BORNE DISEASES



Picture of trailhead sign at Mill Woods Trail in Wethersfield, CT taken on March 15, 2024.

This month we have had some beautiful weather to get outside and be active. It’s a good time to remember to “BLAST”: **B**- Bathe or shower soon after coming indoors and immediately put clothes in dryer on high heat for 20 minutes to kill any ticks that may be attached to them; **L**- Look for ticks and remove with fine point tweezers; **A**-Apply repellents; **S**- Spray tick habitat areas in your yard ([www.spraysafeplaysafe.org](http://www.spraysafeplaysafe.org)); and **T**- Treat pets with veterinarian recommended products. Please visit <https://www.ccthd.org/vectorbornedisease> to find out how to properly remove a tick and how to submit it us for testing.

## 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:**

- None to Report

### **Previously reported:**

- Ground Cinnamon Products by La Fiesta, SWAD, El Chilar, and Colonna due to elevated lead levels.
- Aji Mori Chillimami Sauce due to potential foodborne illness- Clostridium botulinum
- Roland Foods, LLC Tahini due to potential Salmonella contamination
- Enchiladas by Rico for for potential Listeria monocytogenes contamination
- Alipotect Raiz de Tejocote by Alipotec King and Brazil Seed Pute Natural Semilla de Brasil & Tejo Root, Raiz de Tejocte by H&Natural for poisonous yellow oleander
- Raw Cheddar Cheese by Raw Farm LLC for potential contamination with E. Coli 0157:H7
- Cheese, yogurt, and sour cream by Rizo Brothers California Creamery expanded recall for potential *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination

The Connecticut Office of Consumer Protection has put out a **Food Safety Warning and Recall Notice** regarding undeclared allergens in Stew Leonard's 'Apple Crisp Made with Honeycrisp Apples' and 'No Sugar Added Apple Pie' because they contain undeclared milk and eggs. The affected products were sold in Stew Leonard's bakery departments in CT, NJ, and NY between August 28, 2023- March 8, 2024. If you have purchased these products, please bring the product back to Stew Leonard's customer service for a full refund.

For more information on recalls due to food with undeclared allergens, drugs, or medical devices please visit: <https://www.fda.gov/safety/recalls-market-withdrawals-safety-alerts>

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**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/>

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*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.*