

Respiratory Disease Activity Levels In Emergency Department Visits



This report shows thresholds of disease activity levels for COVID-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), and influenza (flu) in Washington state calculated using emergency department (ED) visits from October 01, 2023 through July 13, 2024. This report is updated weekly.

When the percent of ED visits for a virus is above its activity level threshold, it is a sign that there is increased spread of that virus.

Status of Viral Respiratory Condition Activity Levels

Condition	Status	Current Week	Disease Activity Level Threshold*
COVID-19	Low	1.82%	4.00%
Influenza	Low	0.16%	1.20%
RSV	Low	0.01%	0.30%

*Current percentages and thresholds are the percent of ED visits.

Percent of ED Visits for Viral Respiratory Conditions

October 01, 2023 through July 13, 2024



About the Diseases

COVID-19, RSV, and influenza are viral respiratory diseases that can cause more severe respiratory disease outcomes. For more information on how to protect yourself, your family, and community, see these helpful links: [COVID-19](#), [RSV](#), and [influenza \(flu\)](#).

About the Data

This report provides important information about respiratory disease activity for COVID-19, RSV and influenza in Washington state. Information in this report comes from the Washington State Department of Health's Rapid Health Information Network (RHINO). All nonfederal hospitals across Washington State report healthcare encounter data in near real-time to RHINO. **Note:** Data are preliminary and may change. Data reflect healthcare visits, and do not represent unique individuals. Percentages are not cumulative.

For more detailed information about how COVID-19, RSV and Influenza ED visits are identified in this report, please visit the [Respiratory Illness Data Dashboard Technical Notes for Emergency Department Visits](#).

Threshold Calculation Methodology

Disease activity level thresholds for COVID-19, influenza, and RSV are calculated using the [Moving Epidemic Method](#) (MEM). The epidemic threshold is calculated at the start of the respiratory season using data from the previous five seasons.

- Because COVID-19 is a new disease that started transmission in 2020 and does not yet have a clear seasonal pattern, the MEM [multiple wave algorithm](#) was used to classify waves. To calculate the epidemic threshold for COVID-19 for the 2023-24 season, we used data from February 2020 to September 2023.
- To calculate the transmission alert thresholds for influenza and RSV for the 2023-24 season, we used data from the following seasons: 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2022-23. We excluded the 2020-21 and 2021-22 seasons because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As our understanding of respiratory viruses continues to grow, we will re-evaluate and update our methods using newer scientific methods as they become available. Because the COVID-19 threshold was calculated from pandemic levels of disease, the threshold will change over time as disease levels change and become more endemic.

Please reach out to RHINO@doh.wa.gov for questions.



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