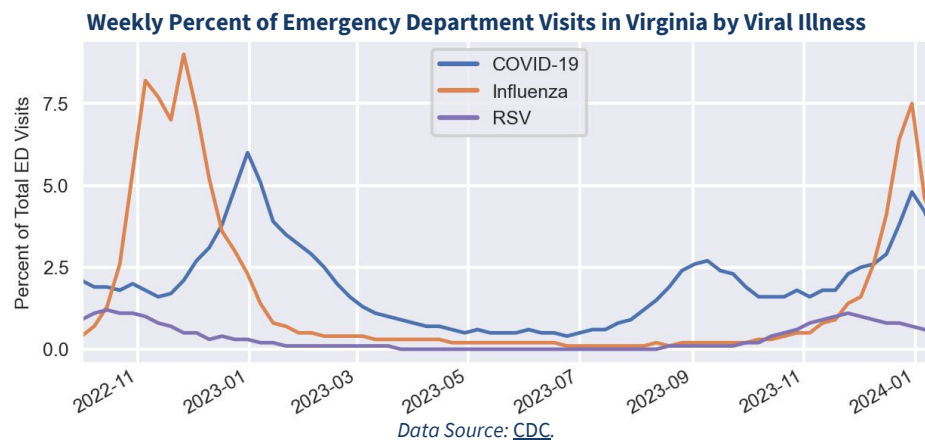


January 19, 2024

Key Takeaways

- Surveillance indicators suggest decreasing respiratory illness activity. ED diagnoses for COVID-19, flu, and RSV have declined two weeks in a row. Wastewater data also suggests decreasing activity levels. Despite the recent declines, overall rates of respiratory illness remain high statewide.
- Hospitalizations for COVID-19 and flu are decreasing. Yet, statewide COVID-19 hospital bed occupancy remains “moderate”. Models suggest flu admissions will decrease, while COVID-19 admissions stabilize.
- Cold air and wintry weather will move into the Commonwealth Friday and remain throughout the weekend. Wind chills overnight Saturday will be below zero in parts of Northwest and Southwest Virginia, and in the single digits in the rest of the state.
- Potential measles exposures in Northern Virginia airports highlights a number of cases nationally. The outbreak in Philadelphia has reached nine total cases.

Key Figures



COVID-19

Low

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 hospital admissions as of January 13.

Moderate

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 hospital occupancy as of January 13.

0% / 32%

Population in localities with “High” / “Medium” COVID-19 hospital admissions levels as of January 13.

Influenza

High

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Jan. 13.

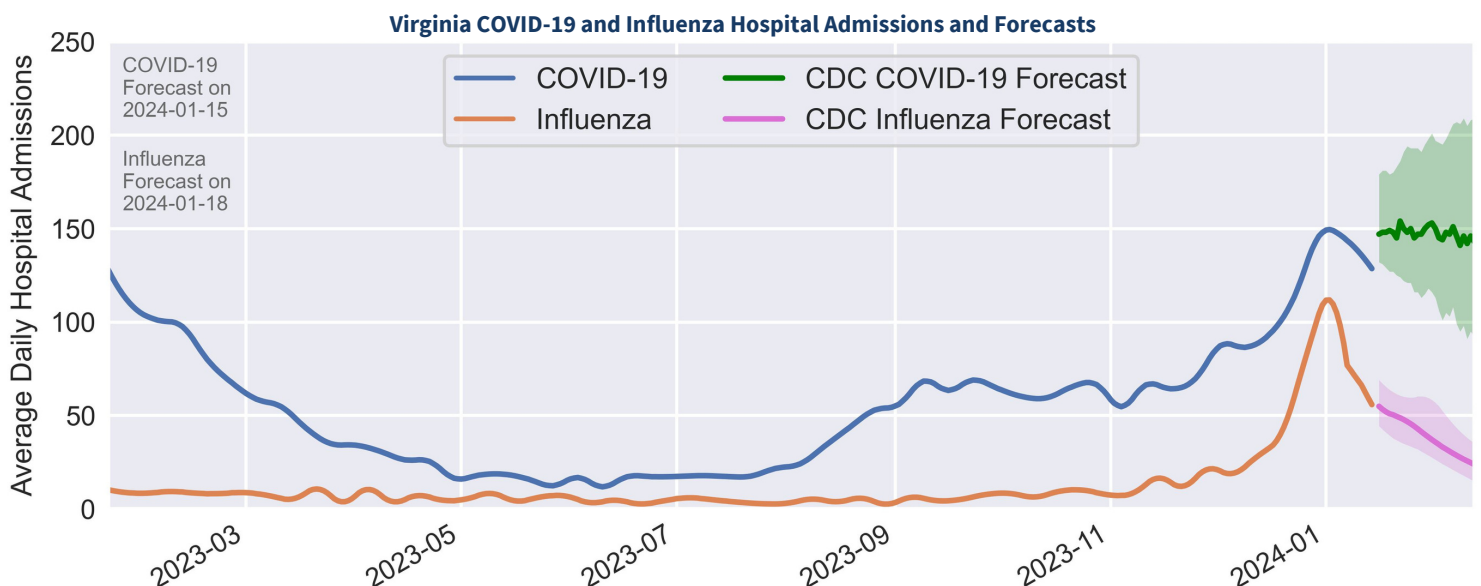
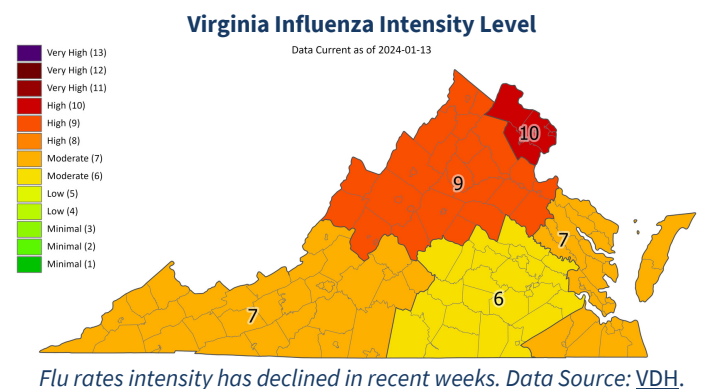
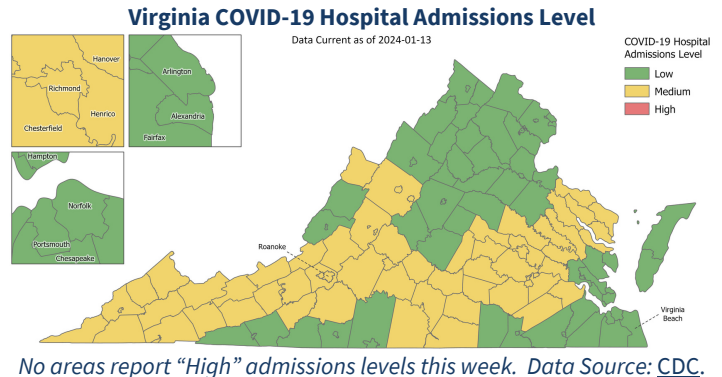
2 of 5

Virginia regions with High influenza intensity levels, as of January 13 (see page 2).

Spotlight: Measles

Seasonal Illness

- **Respiratory illness activity may be decreasing.** COVID-19 diagnoses in the ED have decreased for two weeks in a row, as have diagnoses for influenza. RSV diagnoses have decreased for five straight weeks. The Statewide wastewater viral activity level for COVID-19 is also down from two weeks ago.
- **Respiratory illness rates remain high.** Though decreasing, the statewide flu intensity level remains “high”, and no region reports less than “moderate” flu intensity. Wastewater viral loads for COVID-19 are at the highest they’ve been since January of 2023.
- **Flu and COVID-19 hospitalizations decrease.** For the second week, hospital admissions for COVID-19 patients declined. Rates fell by 20.4%, moving Virginia back into the “low” hospital admissions category per CDC standards. Occupancy remains “moderate”, and CDC forecasts suggest admissions will level off and remain stable through the end of January. Flu hospitalizations fell by 27.3%. CDC ensemble models suggest they will continue to slowly decrease through early February.
- **WHO notes low flu and COVID-19 vaccination rates.** Despite an international surge of respiratory illness, global uptake of flu and COVID-19 vaccines lags behind WHO expectations. Only 19.4% and 44.9% of Americans received this year’s COVID-19 and flu vaccines respectively. These figures are 13.0% and 29.0% respectively for Virginians.
- **COVID-19 vaccines found to protect against COVID-related thromboembolic events.** CDC data from the 2022-23 season suggest that staying up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines could reduce the risk of COVID-related heart attacks, strokes, and clotting events by about 50% for those 65 and older.



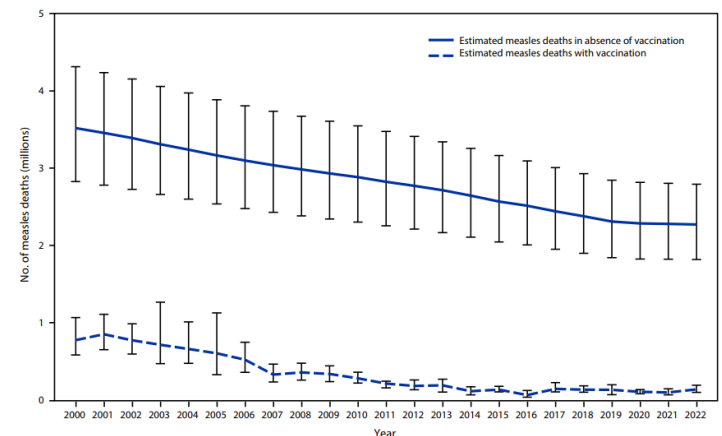
Models suggest slow growth of COVID-19 hospitalizations while flu hospitalizations continue to decrease. 50% confidence intervals shown as shading.
Historical data source: [HealthData.gov](#), COVID-19 forecast data source: [CDC CFA](#), flu forecast data source: [CDC FluSight](#).

Spotlight

- **Virginia Health Officials are investigating potential measles exposures at Northern Virginia airports.** The potential exposures stem from a confirmed case in a person who traveled through Northern Virginia when returning from international travel in early January.
- **Measles outbreak in Philadelphia continues with confirmation of ninth case,** the fifth case associated with a local day-care facility. The health department reports that 93% of children in the city are vaccinated.
- **Measles cases have been reported in several US cities.** Health officials in Washington reported six cases associated with a family gathering earlier this month. Other cases are also being monitored in Camden, New Jersey and Clay County, Missouri.
- **Suspected measles cases in the United Kingdom more than doubled** from 735 in 2022 to 1603 in 2023. The United Kingdom National Health Service reports that measles immunization has declined to 84.5% from a peak of 88.6% in 2014.

Measles

FIGURE. Estimated number of annual measles deaths with measles vaccination and in the absence of measles vaccination — worldwide 2000–2022*†

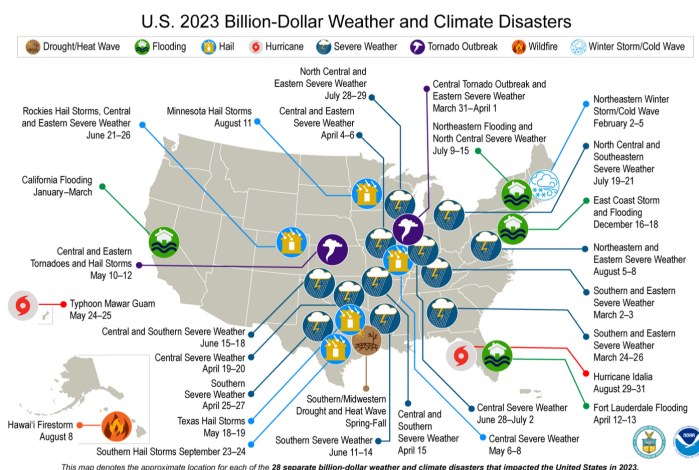


The CDC estimates that 57 million deaths globally were prevented by measles vaccination between the years 2000 and 2022.

Image Source: [CDC](#)

- **A CDC report indicates that decreased vaccination rates** due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to an 18% increase in cases and 43% increase in measles-related deaths globally in 2022 compared to 2021.

Other News



The US was impacted by a record 28 billion-dollar climate or weather-related events in 2023, costing the country almost \$93 billion. This was six more than occurred in the previous record year, 2020. Virginia was affected by 8 events in 2023, tying records set in 2020 and 2021. Over the last five years, the US has experienced an average of 20 billion-dollar events annually, up from three such events annually during the 1980s.

Image Source: [National Centers for Environmental Information](#).

- **Isle of Wight County declares local emergency due to fire at industrial park.** Two minor injuries were reported and the affected warehouse was declared a total loss. The origin of the fire and the risk associated with the potential release of hazardous chemicals remains under investigation.
- **Drug shortage prompts FDA to temporarily allow the import of prescription penicillin from French pharmaceutical company.** Extencilline is similar to Bicillin, but is not approved in the U.S. A rising number of adult syphilis cases has contributed to the shortage, which was first announced by the FDA in April 2023.
- **A recent review suggests over 6.5 million invasive fungal infections occur annually across the globe.** Infections contribute to over 3.8 million deaths, with 68% of those deaths being directly attributable to fungal disease. Additionally, data has suggested that antifungals are being over-prescribed, potentially contributing to drug resistance.