

Seasonal Respiratory Viruses Remain At Low Levels Across Illinois

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CHICAGO – Respiratory virus cases remain at low levels across the state, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) said today. The state's overall respiratory illness level is [Low](#) in the most recent available CDC data and the state remained at Low level for COVID-19 hospitalizations, according to the [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#) as of February 10. The data showed that [four counties are at Medium level](#) for COVID-19 hospitalizations and two are at High level.

Although respiratory illnesses have been trending down in recent weeks, IDPH reminds the public that respiratory virus season typically lasts into the spring, and it is possible that illness rates could tick upwards in coming weeks.

“I am pleased to report that respiratory illnesses are remaining at low levels across most of Illinois,” said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra. “IDPH continues to closely monitor the latest data as we near the end of the respiratory virus season. And we remind Illinoisians at risk for severe outcomes to use the highly effective tools available to protect themselves from COVID-19, flu, and RSV.”

If people do develop symptoms of a respiratory illness – including coughing, sneezing, sore throat, a runny nose or fever – IDPH recommends staying home and away from others to avoid spreading illness. If you need to seek medical care, you should wear a mask to limit the risk to others – or try to schedule a telehealth appointment. In addition, public health experts urge anyone who has been recently exposed to COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses to wear a mask when in crowded areas, and if visiting someone at high risk for severe disease. For more on when and where to use a mask, [click HERE](#).

IDPH launched a new awareness campaign in the fall called [‘Tis the Sneezin’](#) to remind Illinoisans that vaccinations provide the best protection against the triple threat of COVID-19, flu and RSV.

RSV season is now winding down in Illinois therefore the use of the RSV vaccine in pregnancy is no longer warranted. However, the shots that can be used to provide infants and young children protective immunity to RSV will continue to be available until the end of the season, and older adults can continue to get their RSV vaccine even after the season is declared over.

To help keep the public informed about conditions around the state, IDPH recently launched an [Infectious Respiratory Disease Surveillance Dashboard](#) that will be updated weekly on Fridays. This report provides the public the latest data on hospital visits, seasonal trends, lab test positivity and demographic data.

Every household in the U.S. is eligible to receive four free at-home tests through the [COVID.gov](#) website. IDPH has also made available a single swab triple-test for Flu /RSV and COVID-19, at no cost, to high risk congregate care settings and local health departments.

For those who are uninsured or under-insured, the CDC launched the [Bridge Access Program](#) last year that covers the cost of COVID-19 vaccines. The [Vaccines for Children Program](#) covers all ACIP recommended vaccines for eligible children, including nirsevimab for RSV protection.

For treatment of COVID-19, Illinoisans who experience symptoms can access no cost-share telehealth services through the [SIU School of Medicine COVID Test to Treat](#) services or call (217) 545-5100. An additional option is the [NIH Test to Treat](#) line or call 1-800-682-2829 to get access to no-cost care.

The federal government has established a website that provides an all-purpose toolkit with information on how to obtain masks, treatment, vaccines and testing resources for all areas of the country at: <https://www.covid.gov/>.