

# Respiratory Syncytial Virus Surveillance

## Background

**Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Young children and older adults, especially those with certain underlying health conditions, are at higher risk for severe illness from RSV. Prophylaxis is available for children who qualify. For more information, contact your health care provider.

## RSV Surveillance

A statewide RSV surveillance system was implemented in Florida to support clinical decision-making for prophylaxis of premature infants.

The determination of unique seasonal and geographic trends of RSV activity in Florida has important implications for prescribing patterns for initiating prophylaxis to children at high risk for complications from RSV infection. The American Academy of Pediatrics currently recommends preapproval for prophylactic treatment be made based on state surveillance data. For more information on RSV surveillance systems used in Florida, see the last page of this report.

**Florida's RSV season is longer than the rest of the nation and has distinct regional patterns.** The Florida Department of Health established regional RSV seasons based on activity thresholds provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see Figure 27). **Currently, all five of Florida's regions are in RSV season.**

To learn more about RSV in Florida, please visit: [FloridaHealth.gov/RSV](http://FloridaHealth.gov/RSV).

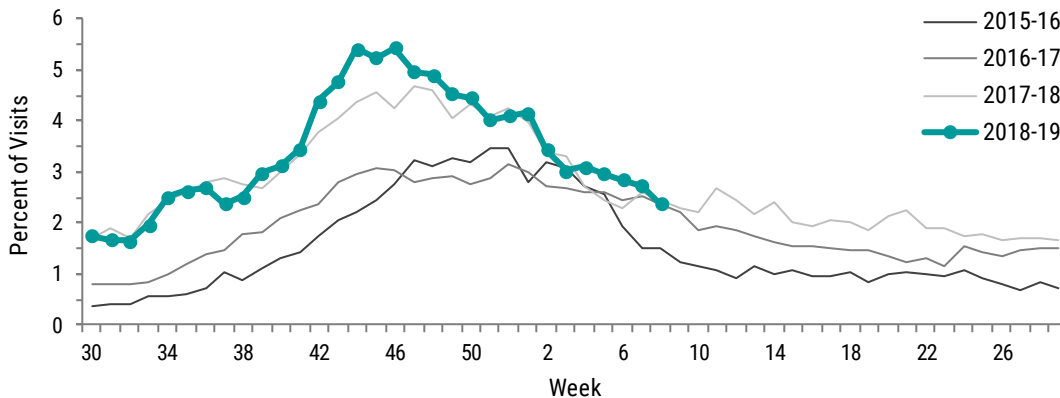
## Week 8 (February 17-23, 2019) Activity Summary

**In week 8, RSV activity in children <5 years old decreased and was similar to levels observed at this time in previous years.**

**No new possible RSV-associated pediatric deaths were identified in week 8.** One possible RSV-associated pediatric death has been identified so far in 2019.

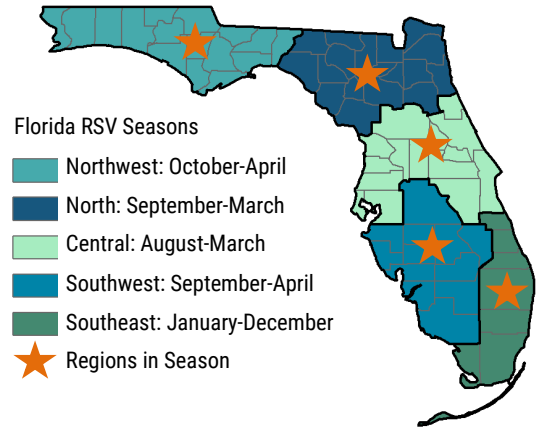
No new outbreaks of RSV were reported in week 8. A total of 11 outbreaks of RSV have been reported since October 2018.

Figure 28: In week 8, **the percent of emergency department and urgent care center visits for RSV among children <5 years decreased** and was similar to levels observed at this time in previous years.



◀ **Figure 28 shows the percent of emergency department and urgent care center visits with discharge diagnoses that include respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) or RSV-associated illness among children <5 years\***, as reported in ESSENCE-FL, week 30, 2015 to week 8, 2019.

\*The overall trend displayed in Figure 28 has been validated through review of hospital discharge data collected by the Agency for Health Care Administration.



▲ **Figure 27 shows Florida's RSV regional season breakdown.** Regions that are currently in RSV season are marked with **orange stars**.

# RSV & Other Respiratory Virus Surveillance

Figure 29: In week 8, **the percent of specimens testing positive for RSV increased** and was slightly below levels observed at this time in previous years.

Figure 29 shows the percent of specimens testing positive for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), as reported by hospital laboratories (n=7), week 30, 2015 to week 8, 2019. ►

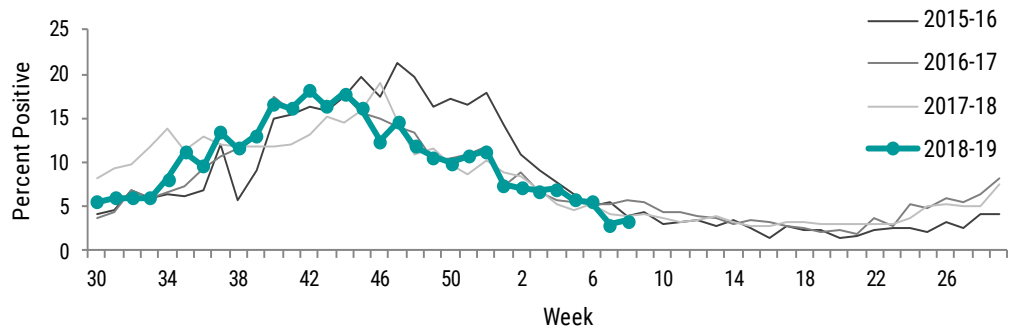
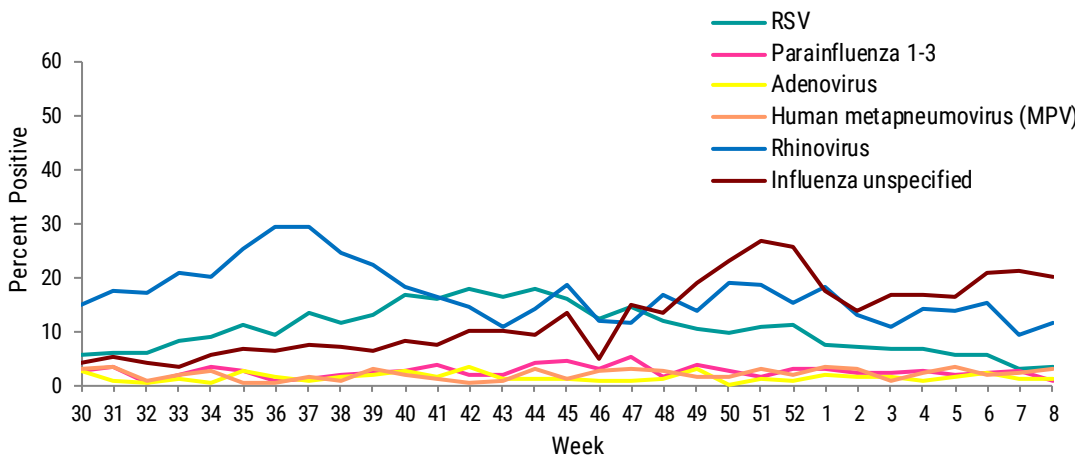


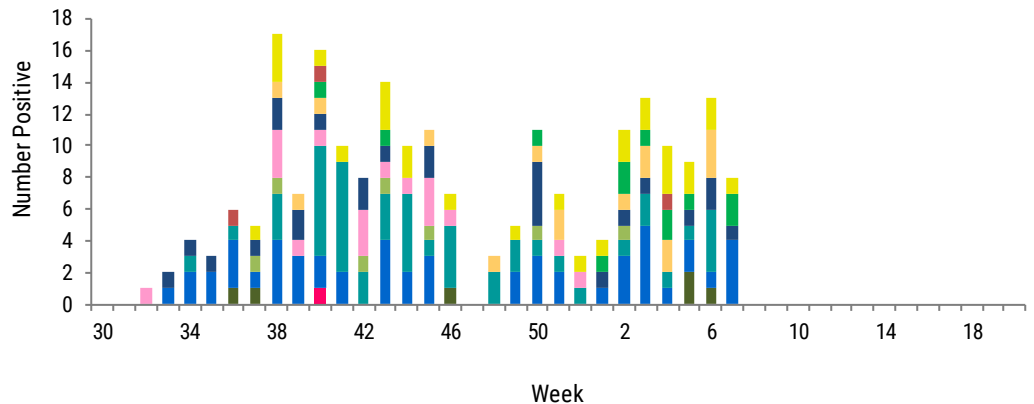
Figure 30: In recent weeks, **the percent of specimens testing positive for influenza decreased slightly** but remained higher than other respiratory viruses under surveillance. In week 8, the **percent of specimens testing positive for rhinovirus increased notably**.



◀ Figure 30 shows the percent of laboratory results testing positive for eight common respiratory viruses, as reported by laboratories participating in the National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NRVESS) and laboratories reporting validated respiratory virus data to the Florida Department of Health via electronic laboratory reporting (n=7), week 30, 2018 to week 8, 2019.

Figure 31: In week 7 (ending 2/16/19), **rhinovirus, enterovirus, coronavirus OC43, and adenovirus** were identified among specimens collected by ARIES providers for extended respiratory panel testing at BPHL.

Figure 31 shows the number of specimens submitted by Acute Respiratory Infection Epidemiology and Surveillance Program (ARIES) providers (n=4) testing positive for 12 common respiratory viruses as reported by the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL), week 30, 2018 to week 7, 2019 (ending February 16, 2019). ►



Note: The most recent data available are displayed here. Laboratory results for submitted specimens that have not yet been tested in full will be included in future reports.

# Florida ILI Surveillance System Summary

## **ESSENCE-FL Syndromic Surveillance and Vital Statistics Portal** Data source for figures 1, 4, 12-20, 23, 24, and 28

Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE-FL) measures trends in influenza-like illness (ILI) visits from emergency departments (ED) and urgent care clinics (UCC) and influenza mortality by using death certificates from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. Participating EDs and UCCs (n=344) electronically transmit visit data into ESSENCE-FL daily or hourly.

For statewide and regional data on ILI, visits are counted as ED or UCC visits to participating facilities that include the words “influenza” or “flu” in patient chief complaints. Chief complaints with the words “fever” and “cough,” or “fever” and “sore throat” are also counted as ILI.

For pneumonia and influenza (P&I) mortality surveillance, death record literals are queried using a free-text query that searches for references to P&I on death certificates. Any mention of P&I in the death certificate literals, with certain exceptions, is counted as a P&I death. Deaths counts are aggregated and presented by date of death.

For respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) surveillance, visits are counted as ED or UCC visits to participating facilities for which RSV or RSV-associated illness is included in the discharge diagnosis.

For RSV mortality surveillance, death record literals are queried using a free-text query that searches for references to RSV on death certificates. Any mention of RSV, syncytial, and bronchiolitis in the death certificate literals, with certain exceptions, is counted as a RSV death. These deaths are also investigated to ensure they meet case definition.

## **Florida ILINet** Data source for figures 2 and 3

ILINet is a nationwide surveillance system composed of sentinel providers, predominately outpatient health care providers. Florida has 118 sentinel providers enrolled in ILINet who submit weekly ILI and total visit counts, as well as submit ILI specimens to the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories for virologic surveillance. For healthcare providers interested in enrolling in ILINet, contact your local county health department.

ILINet is also used as a portal in which the Florida Department of Health reports Florida’s geographic spread of influenza each week to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## **County Influenza Activity in EpiGateway** Data source for figure 5-7

County health department (CHD) epidemiologists report their county’s influenza and ILI surveillance data weekly into The Florida Department of Health’s EpiGateway website. Data from these reports is used to classify influenza activity as: no activity, mild, moderate, or elevated. Setting-specific influenza activity and influenza trend information is also reported by CHDs as available. EpiGateway data provided by CHDs creates a county-by-county breakdown of influenza and ILI activity around the state.

## **Outbreak Reporting in Merlin** Data source for figures 8, 9, 25, and 26; tables 3 and 4

Merlin tracks influenza and ILI outbreak investigations by CHDs. Reports by CHDs include the type of respiratory disease causing the outbreak, settings where outbreaks are occurring, and recommendations made to mitigate the spread of disease. CHD epidemiologists report outbreaks of influenza or ILI into Merlin, Florida’s reportable disease surveillance system.

Outbreaks in assisted living facilities, nursing facilities, and long-term care facilities are defined as two or more cases of influenza or ILI. In schools/camps and child daycares, outbreaks are defined as three or more epidemiologically linked cases of influenza or ILI. The Florida Department of Health does not count household clusters as outbreaks.

## **Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL)** Data source for figure 10 and table 1

BPHL performs testing and subtyping on surveillance specimens from sentinel providers, outbreak investigations, patients with severe or unusual influenza presentations, and medical examiners.

## **United States World Health Organization Collaborating Laboratories Influenza Virus Surveillance** Data source for figure 11; table 2

The United States World Health Organization Collaborating Laboratories Influenza Virus Surveillance is a system that captures antigenic characterizations results for specimens submitted by BPHL to CDC for testing.

## **Case-Based Influenza Surveillance** Data source for figures 21 and 22

Death in a child whose laboratory-confirmed influenza infection has been identified as a contributing to the child’s death are reportable in Florida. Influenza-associated pediatric deaths are documented by CHDs in Merlin.

In addition, an individual of any age infected with novel or pandemic influenza strain(s) is reportable in Florida. Pandemic strain influenza cases are documented by CHDs in Merlin.

For more information about reportable diseases, please visit [FloridaHealth.gov/DiseaseReporting](https://www.floridahealth.gov/disease-reporting).

## **Laboratory Viral Respiratory Surveillance** Data source for figures 29 and 30

The National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) is a CDC surveillance system that captures on eight commonly circulating respiratory viruses as reported by participating laboratories in Florida. NREVSS data are combined with validated electronic laboratory data from Florida laboratories that submit RSV laboratory results via electronic laboratory reporting. Together, this information is used to monitor the temporal and geographic patterns of these viruses.

## **Acute Respiratory Infection Epidemiology and Surveillance (ARIES) Program** Data source for figure 31

Acute Respiratory Infection Epidemiology and Surveillance Program (ARIES) is a nationwide surveillance system composed of 17 participating jurisdictions. Florida has four sentinel providers enrolled in ARIES who submit weekly ILI counts, as well as submit ILI specimens to BPHL for testing.