

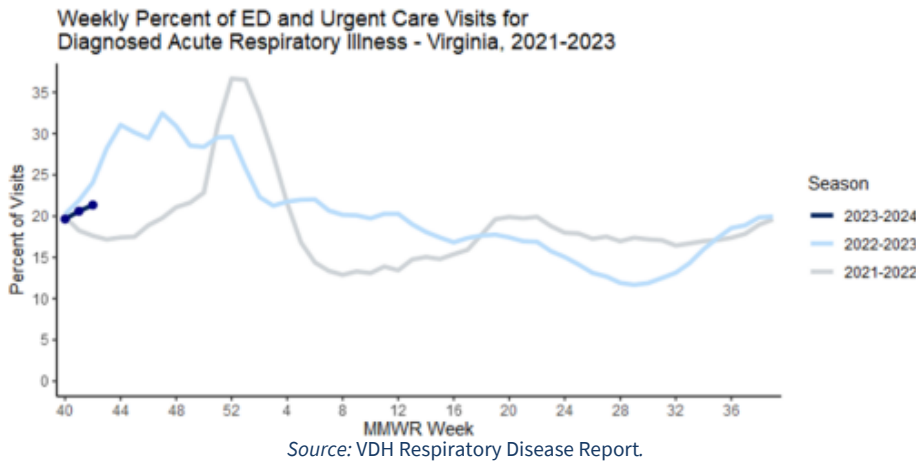
October 27, 2023

## Key Takeaways

- COVID-19 surveillance and forecasts suggest a plateau in activity and hospital admissions.
- Influenza activity has increased, and is now at ‘low’ activity levels in all regions of Virginia. However, statewide activity is minimal.
- RSV rates continue growing slowly in Virginia. Overall rates remain low, but RSV has surged in the Southeastern states.
- The CDC issued an [alert](#) regarding shortages of the RSV monoclonal antibody Nirsevimab. Shortages of influenza antivirals have also been reported.
- 2023 is shaping up to be a record-shattering year for Billion-dollar weather and climate disasters in the US.

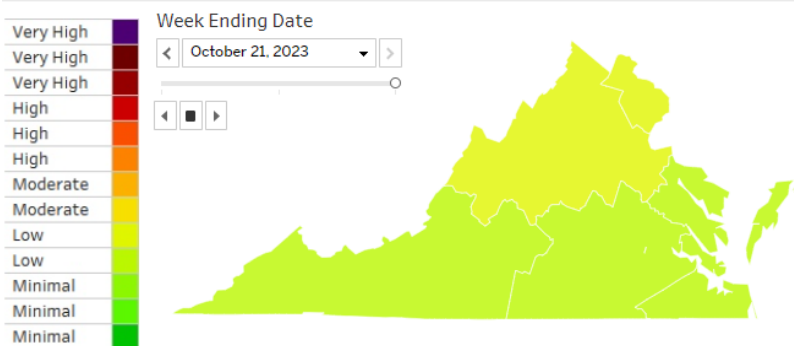
## Key Figures

**Seasonal Comparison of Respiratory Disease Activity**



**Regional Flu Activity Levels**

Intensity Level by Region, Week ending October 21, 2023



## COVID-19

Low

Characterization of COVID-19 hospital admissions and hospital occupancy in Virginia.

## Influenza

Minimal

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Oct. 21.

5 of 5

Virginia regions with Low influenza activity levels, as of October 21.

## Weather & Climate

1, 2, 3, & 5

Ranking for the years 2020-2023 for highest number of Billion-dollar [disasters](#) in the United States.

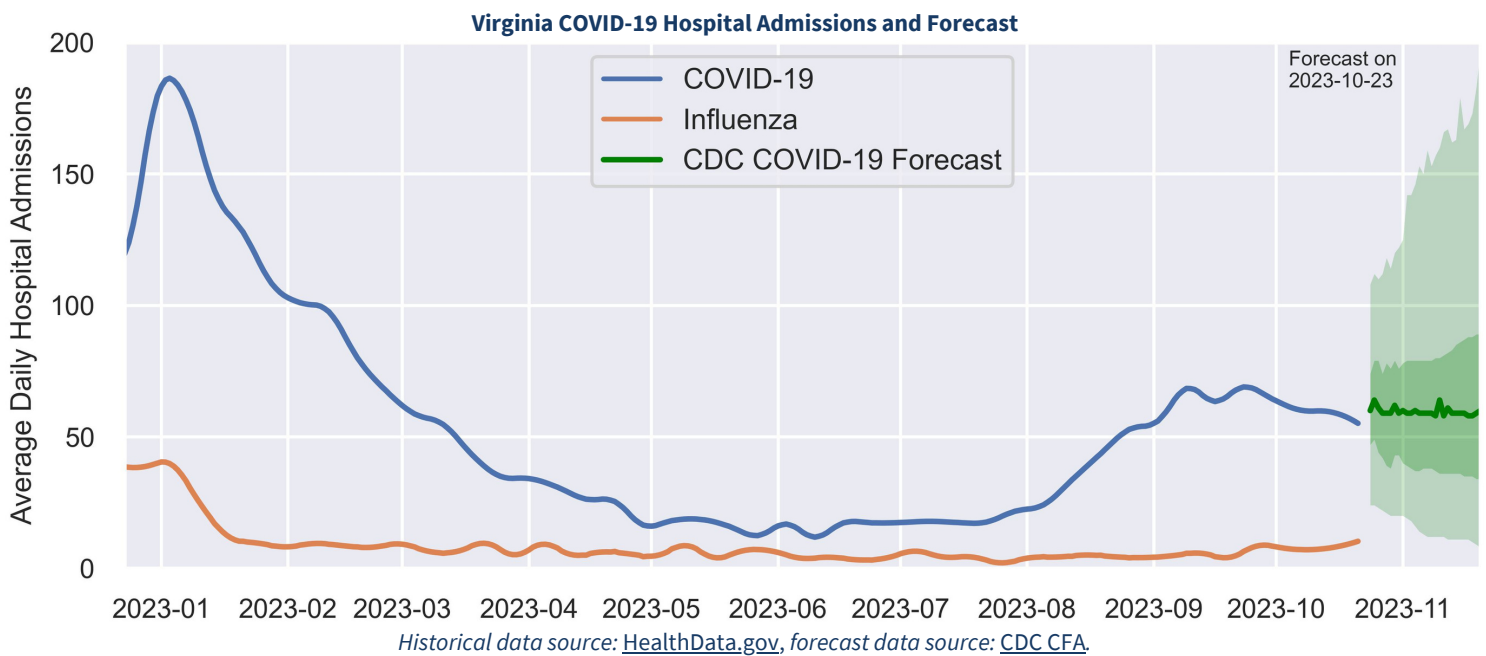
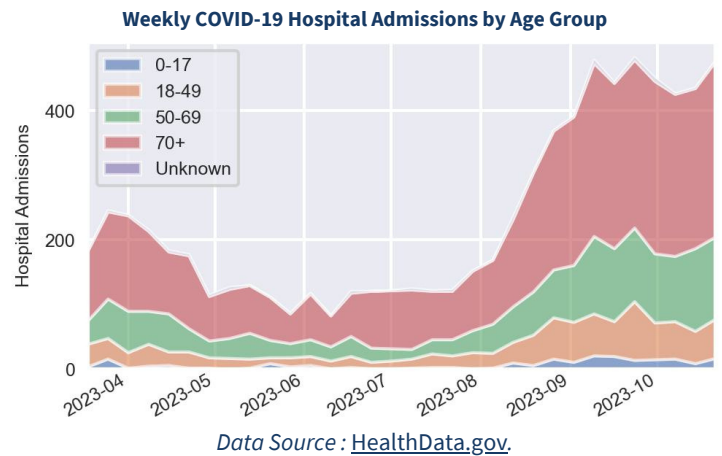
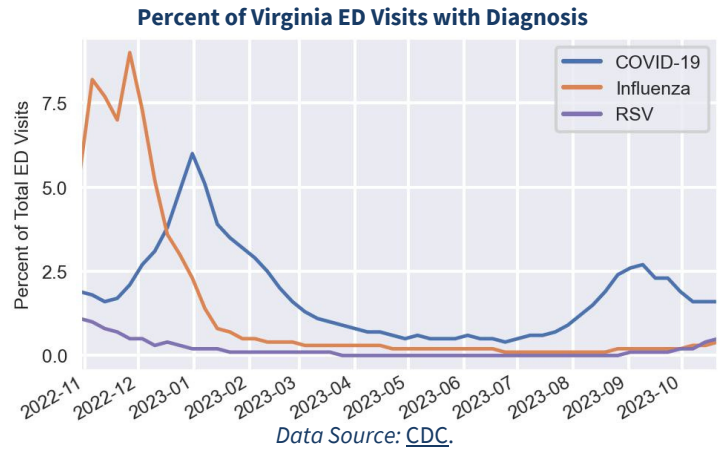
12 hours

The time it took Tropical Storm Otis to [strengthen](#) into a Category 5 Hurricane.

**Spotlight:**  
**Climate Change Impacts**

## Respiratory Illness

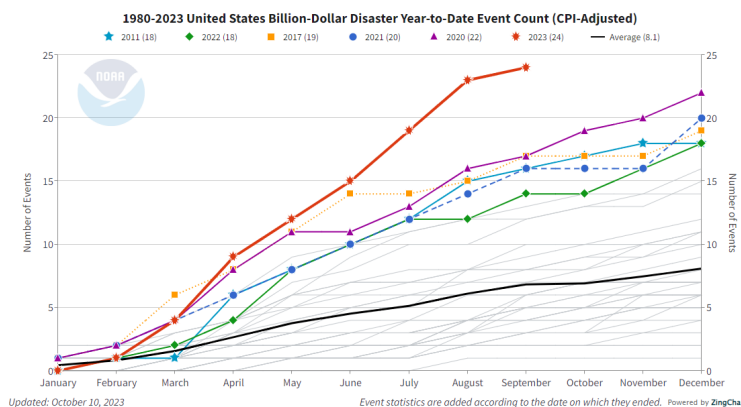
- **Indicators suggest COVID-19 decline is slowing.** The weekly percentage of emergency department (ED) visits resulting in a COVID-19 diagnosis has been in a plateau for three weeks. The rate of COVID-like illness visits has been between 9.0% and 9.6% for the last month. Hospital admissions are down 7.4% this week but grew the week prior. Forecasts of hospitalization rates suggest a plateau through the end of the month.
- **RSV and flu remain low.** Despite the growth of RSV in southern states, rates of both RSV and flu remain low in Virginia. Minor growth was seen for both last week.
- **Antiviral shortages strike nationally.** In an Health Alert Network message, the CDC recommended prioritizing doses of Nirsevimab, a new monoclonal antibody product that protects infants against RSV. Also, a study published in JAMA, found that about half of public health preparedness directors surveyed across all ten HHS Regions reported shortages of Oseltamivir and other influenza related antivirals.
- **Delivery issues hinder vaccine uptake.** Physicians are reporting that higher payments and difficulties in scheduling office visits have made it harder for adults to get routine immunizations.
- **Bulgaria reports SARS-CoV-2 outbreak in mink.** 98 infected animals were found on a farm of 70,000.



## Spotlight

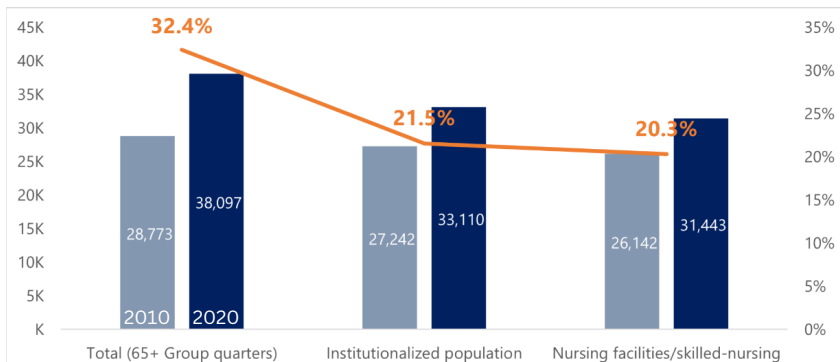
- **Hurricane Otis causes extensive damage in Acapulco, Mexico.** Otis unexpectedly intensified from a tropical storm to a major hurricane in record time, with winds doubling from 70 mph to 160 mph in just 12 hours. Otis made the strongest east Pacific-coast landfall on record. Otis is the fourth tropical system and second major hurricane to hit Mexico’s Pacific coast in October.
- **Super fog, caused by fog and wildfire smoke, blamed for major accidents in Louisiana.** At least seven people were killed and 25 injured in accidents involving an estimated 158 vehicles. Driven by extreme heat, drought, and trees felled by hurricanes, Louisiana is experiencing a record wildfire season.
- **Pasadena reported California’s first case of locally-acquired dengue last week.** Meanwhile the CDC announced that Cutaneous Leishmaniasis is now endemic in Texas. The CDC reported locally-acquired cases of malaria in Florida, Texas, and Maryland earlier this year.

## Climate Change Impacts



Through September, the US has experienced 24 Billion-dollar weather and climate events in 2023, with two more expected pending final cost calculations. This figure exceeds the previous annual record of 22 total events set in 2020. In the 1980’s, the US averaged 3.3 CPI-adjusted events per year. That number has jumped to an average of 18 events annually over the five year period from 2018 to 2022. Image Source: [NOAA NCEI](#)

## Other News



The number of older adults ages 65+ living in group quarters in Virginia has increased between 2010 and 2020.  
 Image Source: [UVA](#)

- **Cyberattacks impact New York hospital operations.** Patients and ambulances at two Westchester area hospitals were diverted to other facilities following a cyberattack last week.
- **Campylobacteriosis outbreak in Utah.** Local health department officials confirmed the consumption of unpasteurized milk prior to the onset of illness in 8 of 10 identified cases.
- **Fire crews are battling a 125-acre wildfire in Shenandoah Park.** The fire, near Quaker Run Road in Madison County, began on Tuesday and its remote, steep location has made suppression difficult. Helicopters are being used to contain the fire.
- **Mass shooting in Lewiston, Maine claims 18 lives.** A shelter-in-place advisory is currently in effect for Androscoggin County where the suspect is still at-large.
- **NIAID-led workshop identifies viruses of pandemic concern.** These families of viruses will be studied in future research aimed towards vaccine development using the “prototype pathogen” approach.