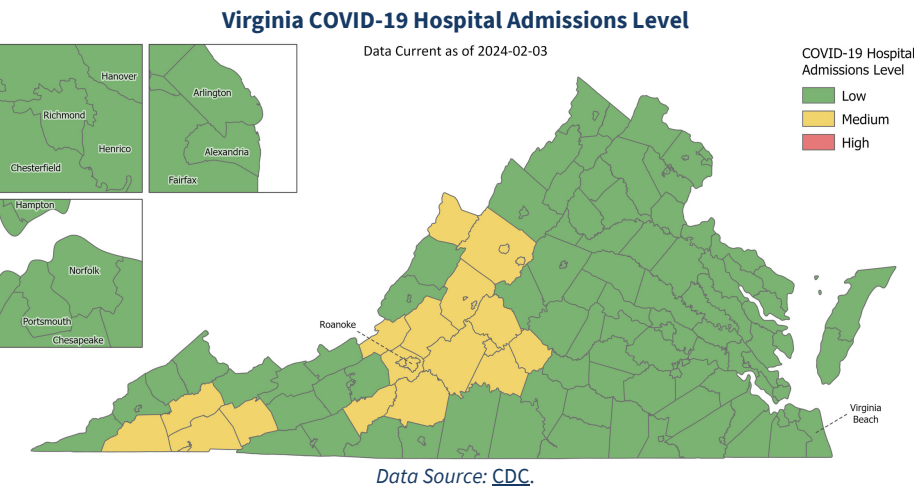
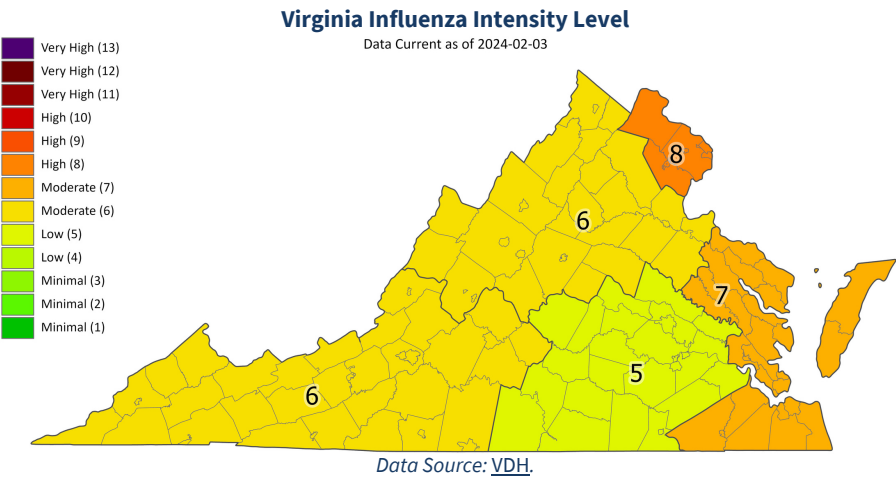


February 9, 2024

## Key Takeaways

- COVID-19, flu, and RSV rates in Virginia continue to decrease slowly. RSV activity is low, but flu and COVID-19 activity remain elevated.
- COVID-19 hospitalizations and bed occupancy are low. Models forecast a continued decline in hospitalizations for both COVID-19 and flu.
- The JN.1 variant of COVID-19 now accounts for about 90% of all new cases in the United States. The ECDC has designated BA.2.87.1 as a “Variant under Monitoring”.
- Chronic wasting disease is spreading rapidly across North America. It has been confirmed in 32 US states and three Canadian provinces. It has also been found in northern Europe and South Korea. Thirteen counties in Virginia have had confirmed cases.
- The number of state hospital beds for adults with severe mental illness has fallen to historic lows.

## Key Figures



## COVID-19

### Low / Low

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 related hospital admissions / hospital bed occupancy as of Feb 3.

### 0% / 11%

Population in localities with “High” / “Medium” COVID-19 hospital admissions levels as of Feb 3.

## Influenza

### High

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Feb 3.

### 1 of 5

Virginia regions with High influenza intensity levels, as of Feb 3.

## Chronic Wasting Disease

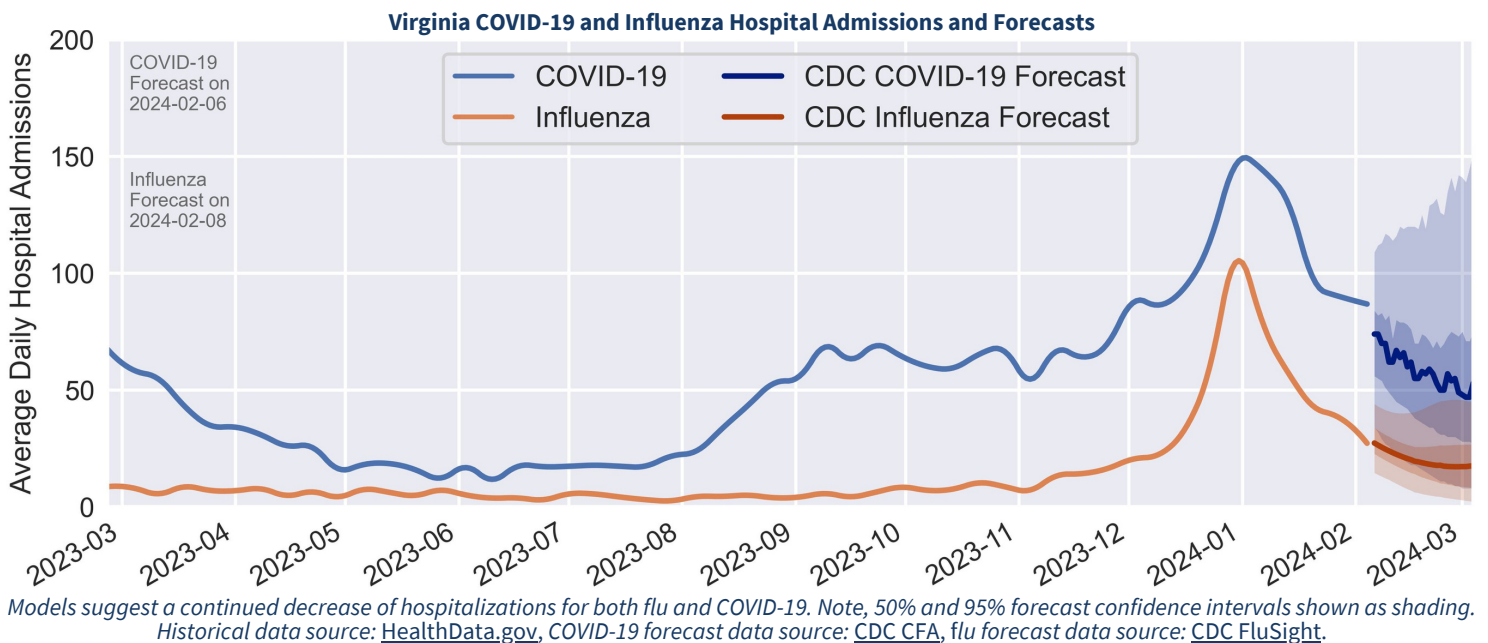
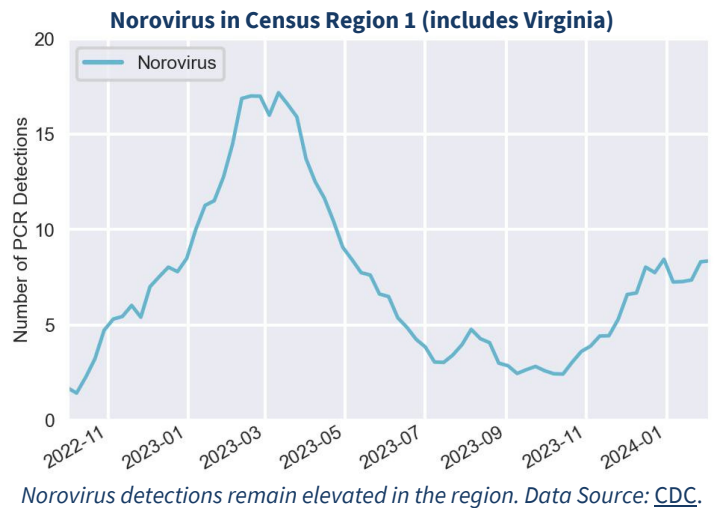
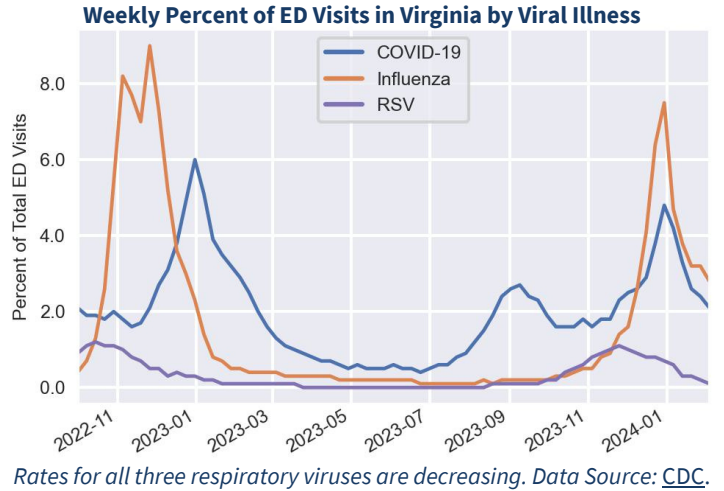
### 181

The number of CWD cases in deer detected in Virginia since 2009.

## Spotlight: Chronic Wasting Disease

## Seasonal Illness

- **Respiratory illness rates are decreasing slowly.** Statewide emergency department (ED) diagnoses for COVID-19, flu, and RSV fell again this week, though at a slower rate than in early January. CDC [wastewater surveillance](#) data corroborate the ED diagnoses data and suggest a slow decrease in viral activity.
- **Flu and COVID-19 rates are still elevated.** Statewide COVID-19 [wastewater viral activity](#) levels are still considered “Very High” by the CDC. Statewide [flu intensity level](#) is also still considered “high”.
- **Flu and COVID-19 hospitalizations decrease slowly.** Hospital admissions for both viruses continue on a declining trajectory that started in late December. Though the rate of decrease has slowed, models suggest it will continue through the start of March.
- **Influenza A outbreak in Columbia.** A surge of cases has caused a [Military Academy in Bogota](#) to initiate quarantine procedures. Though influenza A is still dominant in Virginia, influenza B [now represents almost 40%](#) of new cases in the Commonwealth.
- **Variant proportions evolve as expected.** Variants HV.1 and EG.5 continue to fade. The now dominant JN.1 accounts for [over 90%](#) of new COVID-19 cases in the United States, and about [92% of cases in HHS Region 3](#) (which includes Virginia). The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control designated BA.2.87.1 a “[Variant under Monitoring](#)”.



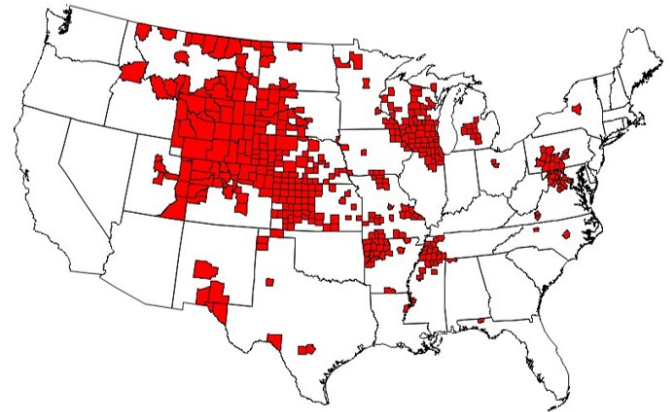
## Spotlight

- **Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is spreading rapidly in North America.** CWD is a prion disease similar to Mad Cow Disease. It affects cervids such as deer, elk, and moose. The spread among free-ranging cervids is concerning due to the potential for human infection, mainly through consumption of harvested meat.
- **181 positive cases of CWD in deer have been detected in 13 counties in Virginia, from 2009 to 2023.** Most CWD detections have occurred in the Northwest, in a geographic cluster extending into West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.
- **A new geographic cluster of CWD cases arose in Southwest Virginia in 2020.** A total of 11 cases have been detected in Montgomery, Floyd, Pulaski, and Carroll counties. The most recent CWD detection, in December from a deer harvested in October, was also the first in Carroll County.

## Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease Among Free-Ranging Cervids by County

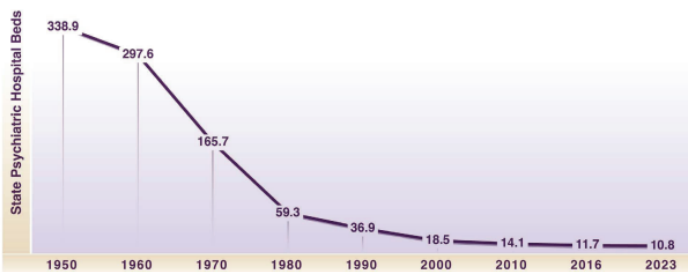
United States, November 2023



As of Nov 2023, there were at least 414 counties in 31 states with reported CWD in free-ranging cervids. Though concentrated in the Midwest, CWD has become widespread. As of Nov 2023, CWD had been detected in 12 Virginia counties. Carroll county became the thirteenth county with a detection in December. Image Source: CDC.

## Other News

State Hospital Beds per 100k Population, United States



The number of state psychiatric hospital beds has declined to historic lows in the U.S. The role of state hospitals has changed, as the industry shifted to more community-based care. State hospitals still have a primary role in caring for psychiatric patients with a connection to the criminal justice system, a history of violence, or with other complex medical needs. Image Source: Treatment Advocacy Center

- **Maryland announced a confirmed measles case with potential airport exposure.** This is the second case involving international travel into Washington Dulles International Airport, following a confirmed case traveling through Virginia earlier this year. Ohio also announced a confirmed case involving travel through the Cincinnati/North Kentucky International Airport.
- **The number state hospital beds for adults with severe mental illness has dropped to historic lows nationally,** dropping to 36,150 beds, or 10.8 beds per 100k population. Although Virginia has more beds than the national average, the number of beds per 100k population has dropped 27% in eight years, from 18.2 beds in 2016 to 14.3 in 2023.
- **State of emergency declared to support response to severe storms in California.** Two rounds of severe storms struck southern California early this week as an 'atmospheric river' moved over the area. Seven deaths and power outages affecting 845,000 homes were attributed to the storm.
- **Three Brazilian states, the city of Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia federal district have issued emergency declarations in response to a dengue outbreak.** Brazil has detected almost 365,000 cases so far this year, four times the number detected over the same period in 2023. The declarations come as the county is preparing for Carnival celebrations to begin on February 14.