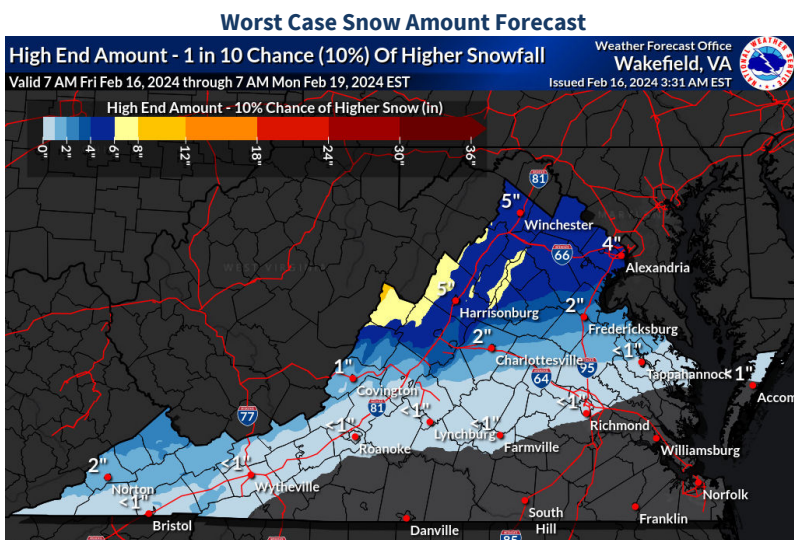
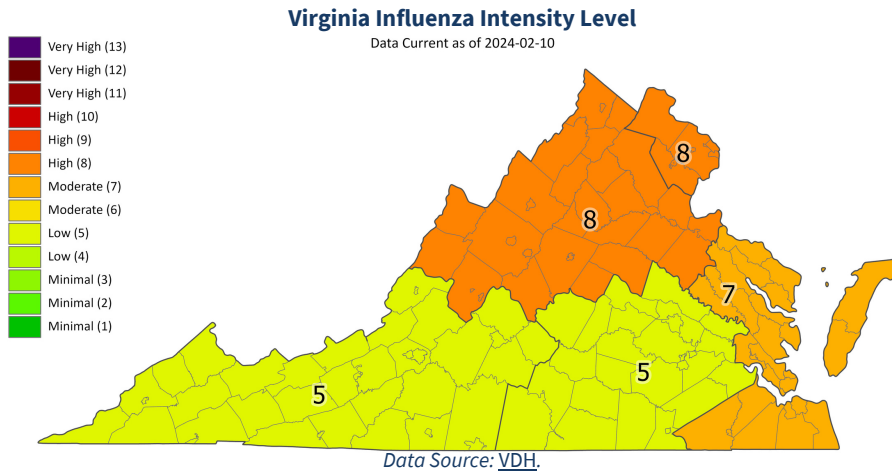


February 16, 2024

Key Takeaways

- The CDC forecasts a continued national decrease in COVID-19, flu, and RSV hospital admissions. The agency expects rates will remain high through February. In Virginia, hospital admissions for both flu and COVID-19 decreased for the sixth week in a row. Models expect hospital admissions to continue to decrease.
- Flu activity increased slightly this week, while COVID-19 rates decreased. Activity for both viruses remains elevated across the Commonwealth.
- Norovirus rates are increasing in the region.
- Virginia’s spring fire season began Feb 15 and will end on Apr 30.
- Snow is expected to impact much of the state Fri evening into Sat morning, with accumulations exceeding 2" in northern and northwest Virginia. Totals could exceed 6" in some areas in a worst-case scenario.

Key Figures



COVID-19

Low / Low

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 related hospital admissions / hospital bed occupancy as of Feb 10.

0% / 11%

Population in localities with “High” / “Medium” COVID-19 hospital admissions levels as of Feb 10.

Influenza

High

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Feb 10.

2 of 5

Virginia regions with High influenza intensity levels, as of Feb 10.

Mpox

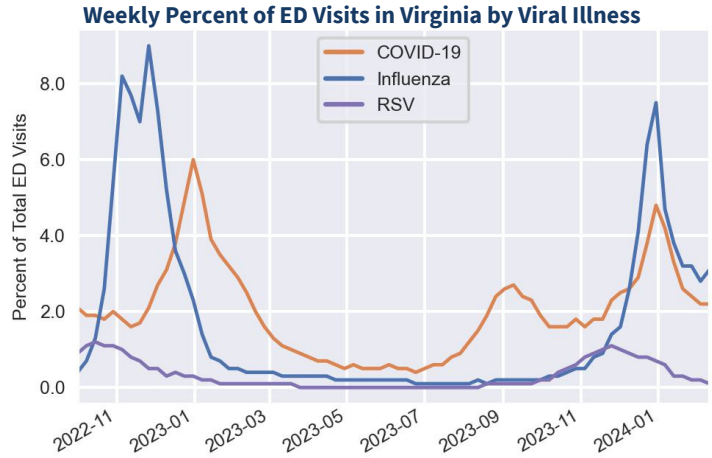
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The number of mpox cases in Virginia since Nov 1, 2023, including four this year.

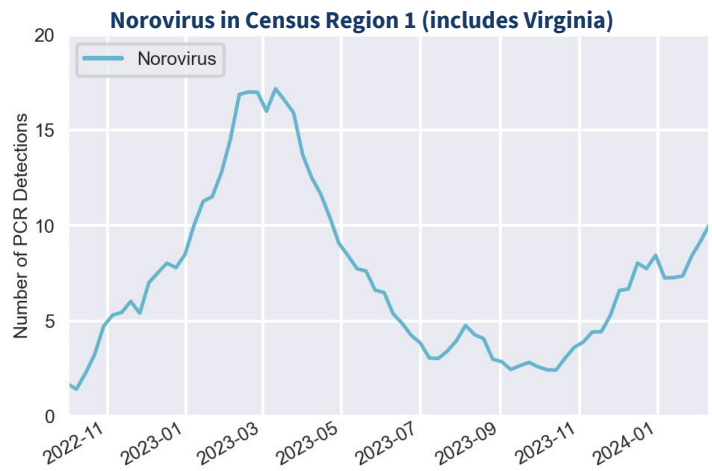
Spotlight:
 Healthcare-Associated Infections

Seasonal Illness

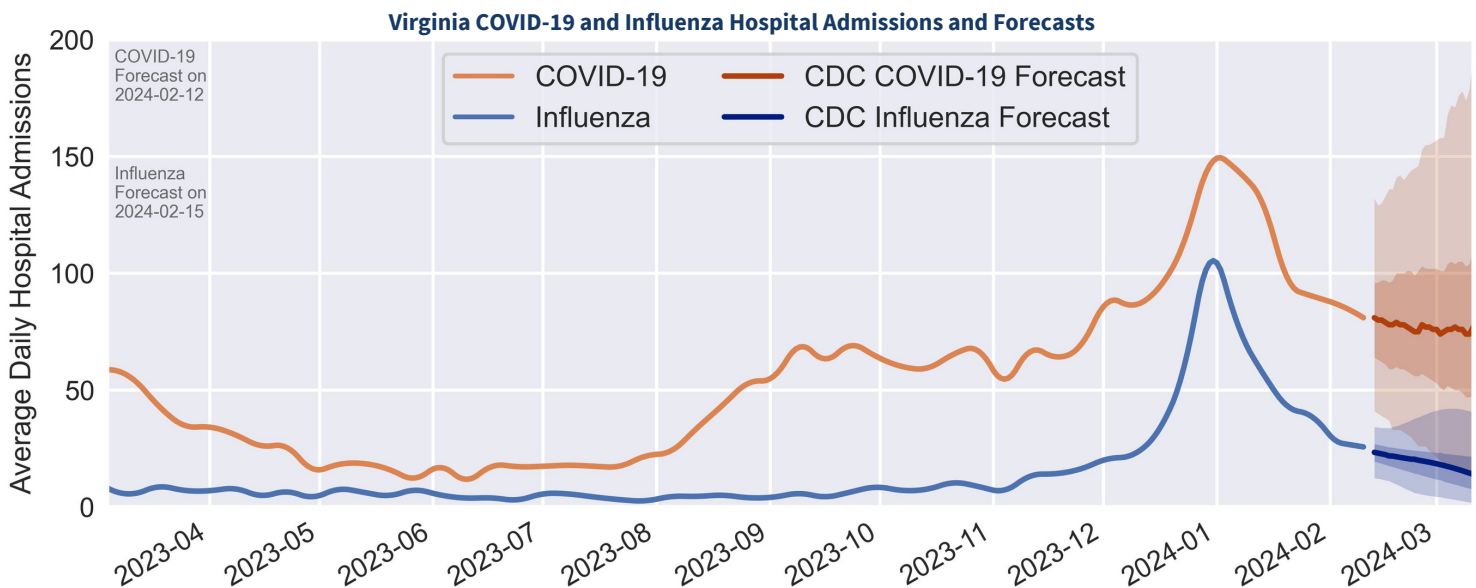
- **Flu activity still high, increases slightly.** After a sustained decrease of several weeks, ED diagnoses of flu increased this week. Flu intensity in the Southwest region of Virginia decreased to “low” but increased to “High” in the Northwest region.
- **COVID-19 activity remains high but is decreasing.** ED diagnoses of COVID-19 decreased slightly this week, continuing a six-week trend. CFA modeling suggests COVID-19 is stable in Virginia, but statewide wastewater viral activity is still “Very High”.
- **Hospital admissions continue to decrease slowly.** Flu and COVID-19 admissions fell slightly this week. Hospital admissions typically lag new cases by a few weeks. Models suggest a continued decline for both viruses in Virginia.
- **CDC updates seasonal outlook.** In the February update to the national seasonal outlook, the CDC forecast a continued decline of COVID-19, flu, and RSV with moderate confidence.
- **CDC tracking BA.2.87.1 variant of COVID-19.** First detected in South Africa, the unusual variant has not yet caused an increase of infections in that nation. No BA.2.87.1 cases have been detected in the U.S.
- **Norovirus detections increasing in region.** After a brief plateau, the rate of PCR detections of Norovirus in Census Region 1 (including Virginia) has started increasing again. In 2023, detections peaked in March.



Flu diagnoses in the ED increased slightly this week. Data Source: [CDC](#).



Norovirus detections are increasing in the region. Data Source: [CDC](#).



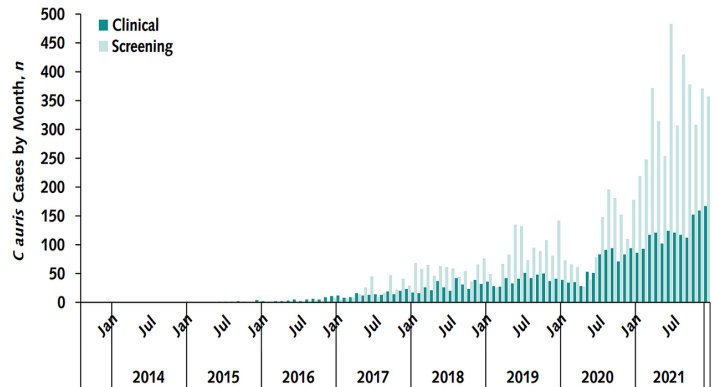
Models suggest a continued decrease of hospitalizations for both flu and COVID-19. Note, 50% and 95% forecast confidence intervals shown as shading. Historical data source: [HealthData.gov](#), COVID-19 forecast data source: [CDC CFA](#), flu forecast data source: [CDC FluSight](#).

Note that the colors representing flu and COVID-19 on this page have been inverted since the last report to match the CDC's color scheme.

Spotlight

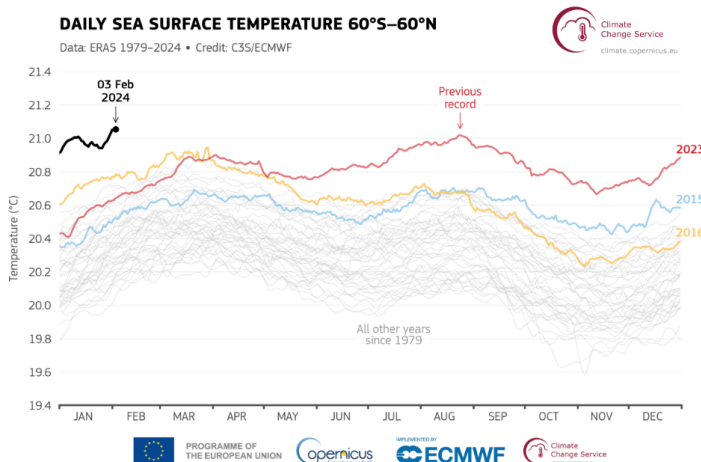
- **Carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae* spreading in Europe.** While hypervirulent K pneumoniae (hvKp) strains have been primarily found in Asia, a recent assessment found that ten European countries have reported cases. hvKp strains more commonly caused community-acquired infections in the past, but have recently become more prevalent in healthcare facilities.
- **Global conflicts linked to the increased prevalence of treatment-resistant pathogens.** Overcrowded hospitals, limited resources, and poor infection control measures have made it difficult to manage the transmission and treatment of infections in Gaza. Unsanitary war conditions in Ukraine have also been associated with a rise of new multidrug-resistant “superbugs” that can rapidly spread from the front-lines to the general population.
- ***Candida auris* outbreak reported at Seattle long-term care facility.** The outbreak was identified through proactive screening, and infection was detected in four patients, two of whom acquired the infection at the facility.

Healthcare-Associated Infections



A 2023 study found that cases of Candida auris have significantly increased since it was first detected in 2016. That year, 53 cases were reported to the CDC, while 1,471 cases were reported in 2021. This represents a near 27 fold increase in five years. Image Source: Lyman, Meghan, et al. "Worsening Spread of Candida auris in the United States, 2019 to 2021." Annals of Internal Medicine 176.4 (2023): 489-495.

Other News



Global sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in January, along with global surface temperatures, were the warmest for January on record. They were also the second highest value for any month on record, with the highest record set in August 2023. Since January, the daily SST has reached new absolute records, surpassing previous records set in August 2023. Sea surface temperatures can drive tropical cyclone creation and strengthening. Image Source: Copernicus Climate Change Service (EU).

- **One person was killed and 22 were injured in Kansas City mass shooting.** At least 11 children were among the injured. The shooting incident occurred during a Super Bowl parade and celebration attended by approximately 1 million people.
- **January 2024 was the warmest January on record.** This was the eighth month in a row that was the warmest for its respective month. January also marked the first 12-month period on record where global temperatures exceeded 1.5C above the 1850-1900 baseline, the limit considered as crucial to avoid the most severe consequences of climate change.
- **Virginia’s spring fire season began February 15,** and will continue to April 30. Currently, five of six Virginia forestry regions are rated as Moderate fire danger, while the sixth is at low fire danger.
- **A Chicago children’s hospital has taken its network offline due to a cybersecurity incident,** limiting access to medical records and hampering key communications. Experts warn such attacks are expected to increase.