

April 5, 2024

## Key Takeaways

- Seasonal respiratory disease activity continues to decrease in Virginia. ED diagnoses for flu and COVID-19 both declined by more than 30% in the last month.
- Hospital admissions for flu and COVID-19 are decreasing. Combined admissions are down 37% in the last four weeks. Models expect a continued gradual decline of hospital admissions.
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been detected in dairy cows and a farm worker. The CDC assesses the risk to human health is low.
- Colorado State University forecasts the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season will be ‘extremely active.’

## Key Figures

**HPAI Detections in Domestic Livestock - Affected States.**

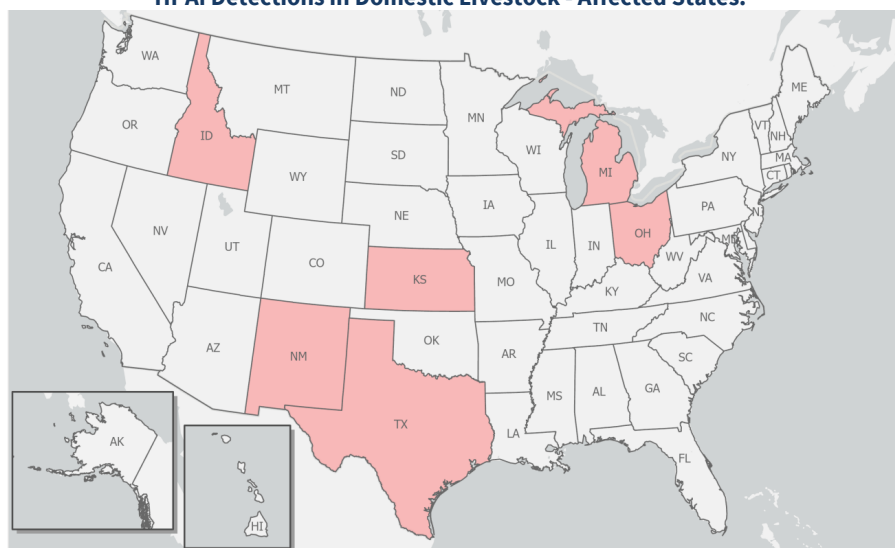
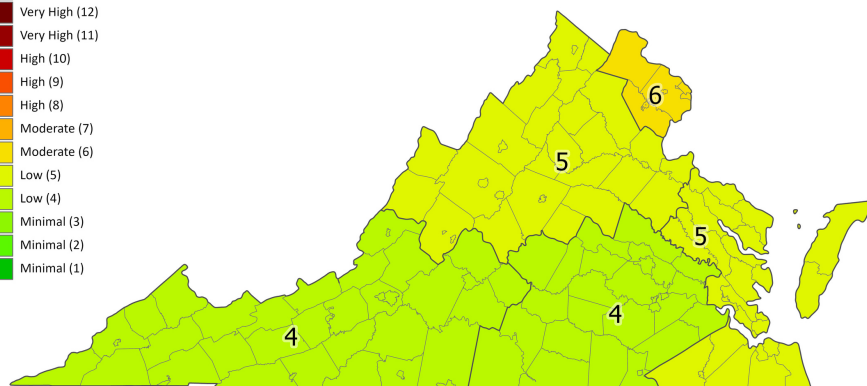
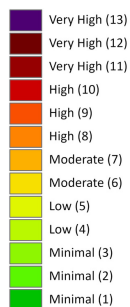


Image Source: [USDA APHIS](#). Data Current as of 2024-04-04 at 12:00 PM

**Virginia Influenza Intensity Level by Region**

Data Current as of 2024-03-30



No region in the Commonwealth reports a ‘high’ flu intensity level. Data Source: [VDH](#).

## COVID-19

### Low / Low

Characterization of statewide COVID-19 related hospital admissions / hospital bed occupancy as of Mar 30.

## Influenza

### Low

Statewide influenza activity levels in Virginia, as of Mar 30.

### 1

Virginia region with moderate influenza intensity levels, as of Mar 30.

## Mpox

### 16

The number of mpox cases reported in Virginia in 2024 as of Apr 01.

## Tropical Activity

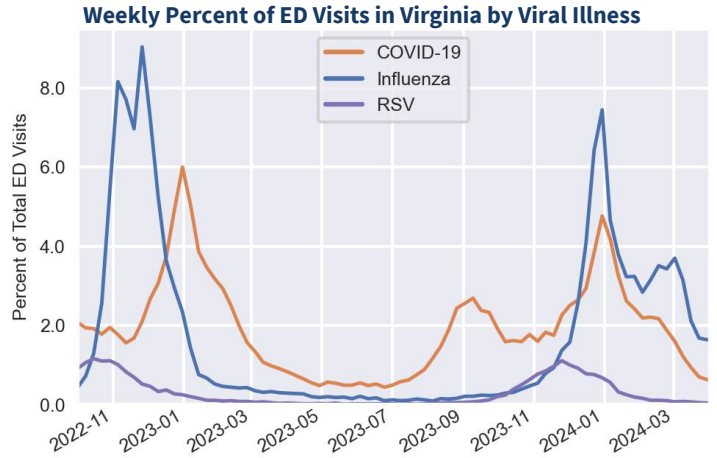
### 23

The number of named storms CSU forecasts for the 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season, compared to 14.4 in the average season.

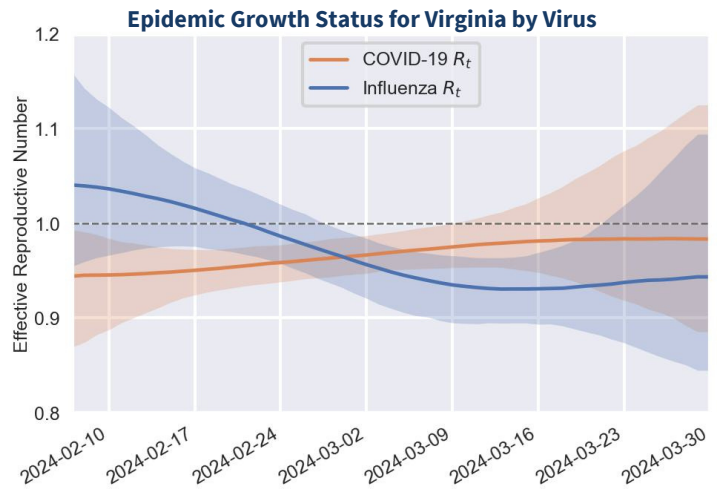
## Spotlight: Avian Influenza

## Seasonal Illness

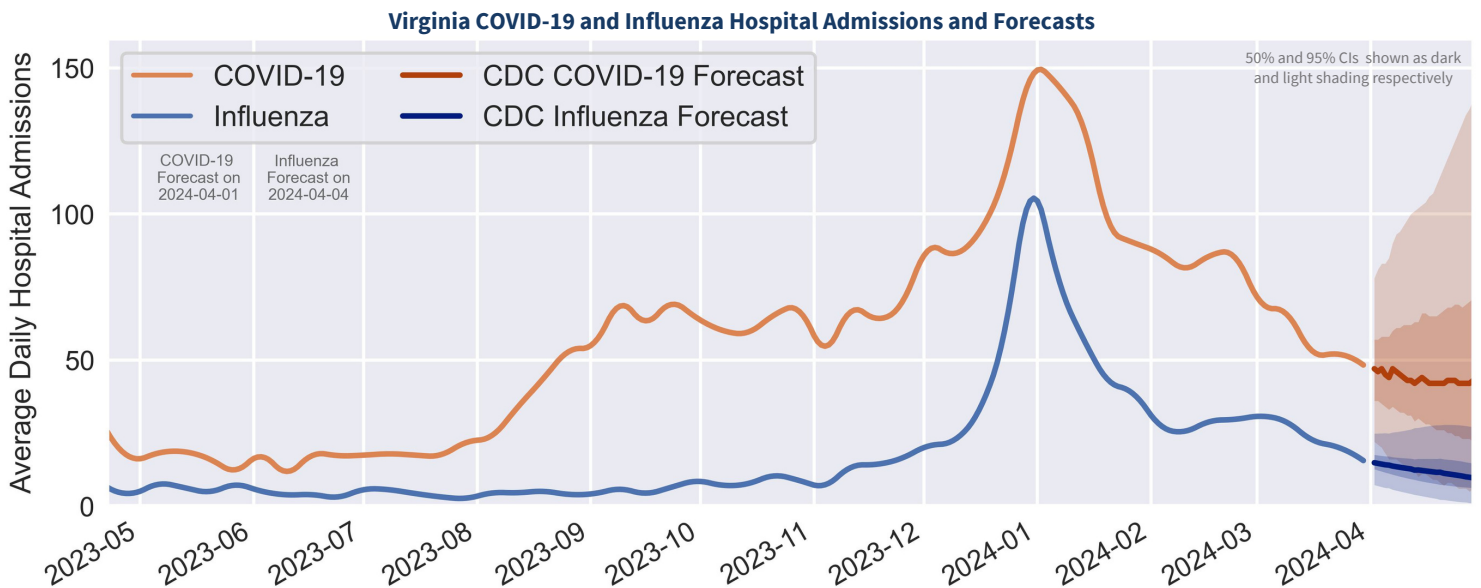
- Influenza activity continues to decrease statewide.** Emergency department (ED) diagnoses of flu have decreased for four weeks in a row and are now at around 1.6%. The statewide intensity level is 'low'. Epidemic growth models suggest that Influenza is on a 'likely declining' trajectory in Virginia.
- COVID-19 rates consistently decreasing.** Statewide ED diagnoses of COVID-19 decreased to 0.61% this week. This marks seven weeks of continued declines, and the fourth week of rates below 1.0%. The wastewater viral activity level for COVID-19 in Virginia is 'low'. Epidemic models indicate that COVID-19 is now in a 'stable or uncertain' trajectory in the Commonwealth.
- RSV rates near background lows.** Statewide ED diagnoses rates of RSV have been around 0.1% since the start of March. No county in the state reported an RSV ED diagnosis rate of more than 0.35% last week.
- Flu and COVID-19 hospitalizations are decreasing.** Virginia recorded 338 COVID-19 and 109 influenza related hospital admissions last week. This represents 31% and 50% decreases since the start of March for COVID-19 and flu respectively. Models suggest that hospital admissions will continue a gradual decline.
- Gastrointestinal disease activity still elevated.** Data from WastewaterSCAN show that norovirus and rotavirus activity levels are 'high' nationwide. Upward trends were detected for both viruses.



Diagnoses of respiratory viruses continue to decline. Data Source: [CDC](#).

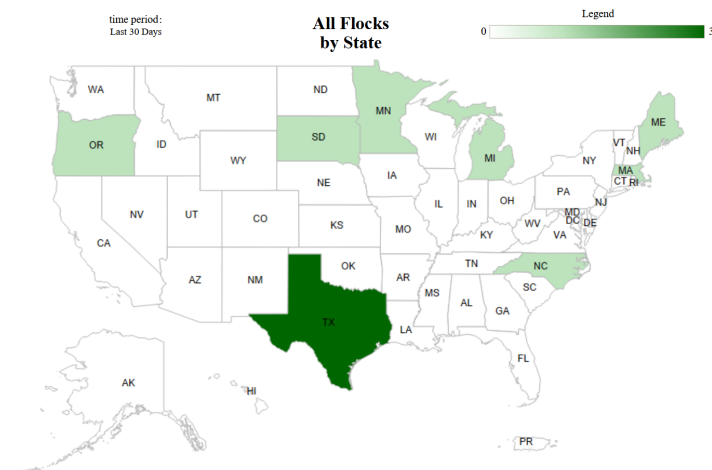


COVID-19 and flu are likely declining in Virginia. Data Source: [CFA](#).



Epidemic models suggest a stabilization of hospitalizations for COVID-19, while flu hospitalizations continue a very gradual decline. Historical data source: [HealthData.gov](#), COVID-19 forecast data source: [CDC CFA](#), flu forecast data source: [CDC FluSight](#).

## Spotlight



HPAI has been detected in 10 commercial and backyard flocks in eight states in the past 30 days, including two large commercial egg layer flocks in the past week. HPAI has not been detected in a Virginia flock since March of last year; however, the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources is investigating an 'increasing number' of suspected cases in wild birds.  
 Image Source: [USDA APHIS](#)

## Other News

### Forecast for 2024 Hurricane Activity

Forecast Parameters	CSU Forecast for 2024*	Average for 1991-2020
Named Storms	23	14.4
Named Storm Days	115	69.4
Hurricanes	11	7.2
Hurricane Days	45	27.0
Major Hurricanes	5	3.2
Major Hurricane Days	13	7.4
Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE)+	210	123
ACE West of 60 degrees longitude	125	73

\*CSU released its first seasonal forecast for 2024 on Thursday, April 4.

+A measure of a named storm's potential for wind and storm surge destruction defined as the sum of the square of a named storm's maximum wind speed (in 10<sup>4</sup> knots<sup>2</sup>) for each 6-hour period of its existence.

*Colorado State University forecasted an extremely active 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Sea surface temperatures are at record-high levels and are expected to remain elevated in the upcoming hurricane season, creating a conducive environment for storm formation.*

Image Source: [Colorado State University](#)

## Avian Influenza

- **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been detected in dairy cows in over a dozen herds spanning six states** (Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, Michigan, Idaho, and Ohio). It was also detected in cats in at least one Texas farm. In some cases, farms had received cattle from herds where HPAI was later detected, suggesting the possibility of cow-to-cow spread, though this is unconfirmed.
- **One worker from an affected farm contracted HPAI.** Symptoms were limited to conjunctivitis and respiratory infection is not suspected. Genetic testing revealed mutations that support mammal infection, but did NOT show mutations thought to support human-to-human transmission, antiviral escape, or escape from vaccines currently under development.
- **The CDC assesses the current risk from HPAI to be low, but may vary based on exposure.** HPAI was detected in raw milk but is not suspected to have entered the food supply. Pasteurization destroys viruses in milk, including HPAI. Consumers should not drink unpasteurized milk, which always poses a serious health risk. HPAI has not been detected in beef cattle.
- **The CDC has received 97 reports of measles across 18 states so far in 2024,** including 46 in the past month. 56% required hospitalization. Most cases and hospitalizations have been among individuals under the age of 5. Measles cases are also approaching a 10-year peak in the U.K., where 182 new cases have been confirmed in just the last four weeks.
- **A magnitude 4.8 earthquake struck New Jersey Friday.** The earthquake rattled New York City and Philadelphia, and was felt as far away as Northern Virginia. At the time of publication, there had been no reports of injuries or damage. The USGS forecast the chance of a magnitude 3 or higher aftershock at 45%, and a magnitude 5 or higher aftershock at just 4%.
- **An EF-1 tornado touched down in Virginia on Wednesday afternoon.** The tornado lasted about six minutes and traveled 5.3 miles, impacting the Northern Neck region, including Northumberland and Richmond counties. Minor damage was reported.