



Winnebago County

Health Department

555 N. Court St. / Rockford, IL 61103
(815) 720.4050

publichealth.wincoil.gov

Health ALERT

Recommended Action in Response to Increase in Respiratory Viruses

January 2, 2026

Respiratory surveillance activity in the region is showing an increase in influenza like illness (ILI), COVID like illness (CLI) activity and confirmed influenza cases.

Based on the surveillance activity identified in the Week 52 Respiratory Report (see attached), the Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) is recommending hospital inpatient and long-term care facilities (skilled nursing) in the Winnebago County implement enhanced Infection Control Practices for respiratory viruses to reduce the impact on the most vulnerable within the community. These practices include:

1. Temporary visitor restrictions for anyone under the age of 18; and
2. Universal masking within the facility.

The following summarizes influenza activity at the national, regional, state and local level.

U.S. – The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) (CDC) reports as of December 30, 2025, Seasonal influenza activity is elevated and continues to increase across the country.

Illinois – [The Illinois Department of Public Health](https://www.idph.state.il.us) is reporting moderate activity for the week ending December 20, 2025 (Week 51). The percent of outpatient visits for ILI was reported at 4.5% (baseline 2.3%).

Local (Winnebago County) – ILI reported from sentinel sites through BioSense Syndromic Surveillance System increased to 5.77% (baseline 2.3%) of emergency department (ED) visits for Week 52. Reported laboratory confirmed cases of influenza increased 173% from Week 50 to 51 and a 41% increase between Week 51 and 52. Week 52 saw the single largest number of cases reported this influenza season.

CDC Week	Week Ending	Cases of Influenza Reported
Week 50	December 13, 2025	198
Week 51	December 20, 2025	541
Week 52	December 27, 2025	761

Additional information can be obtained from the weekly respiratory surveillance reports on the WCHD's website <https://publichealth.wincoil.gov/data-and-reports/data-and-charts/>.

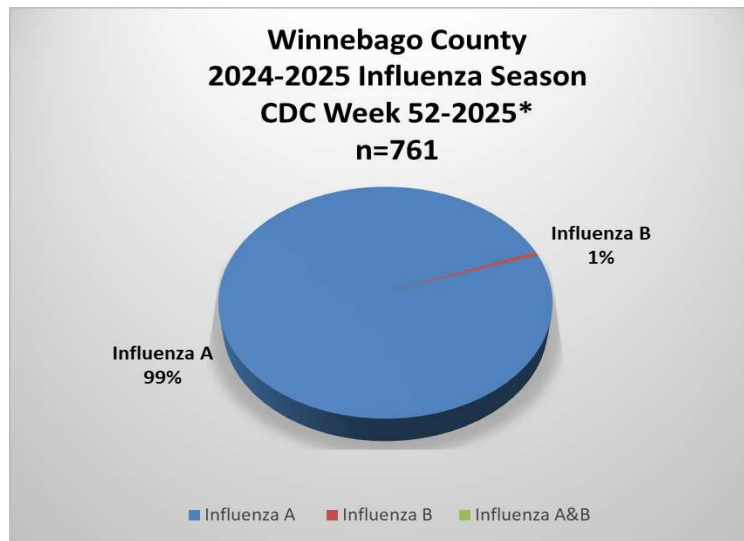
Please contact WCHD at 815-720-4050 to report an outbreak or with any questions.



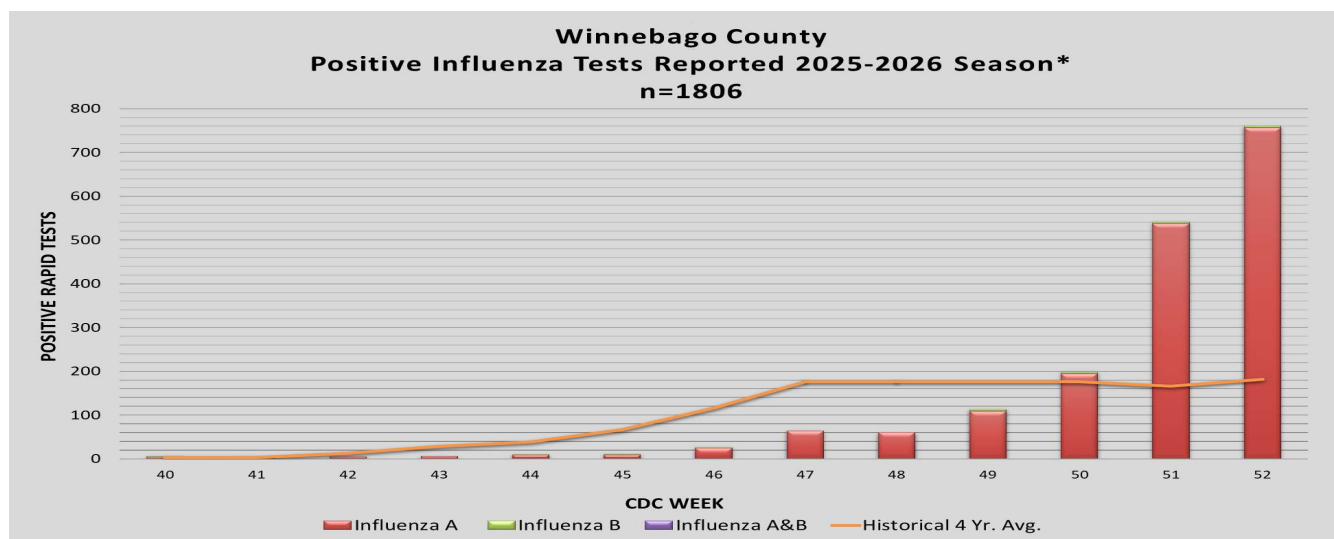
CDC Week 52: Week Ending Saturday, December 27, 2025

COVID-19, Influenza, and RSV vaccinations are recommended to prevent severe respiratory illness.

Weekly Influenza Activity Summary: This week's surveillance activities shows **761** cases of influenza in Winnebago County as detailed in this report. Influenza surveillance for the County involves the weekly collection of data from our partners including hospitals, physicians, clinics, long term care (LTC) facilities and laboratories.



Total Number of Influenza Cases for the Reporting Week By Age Distribution			
Age Range	Influenza A	Influenza B	Influenza A&B
0-4	145	0	0
5-24	320	2	0
25-49	127	2	0
50-64	56	0	0
65+	109	0	0
TOTALS	757	4	0



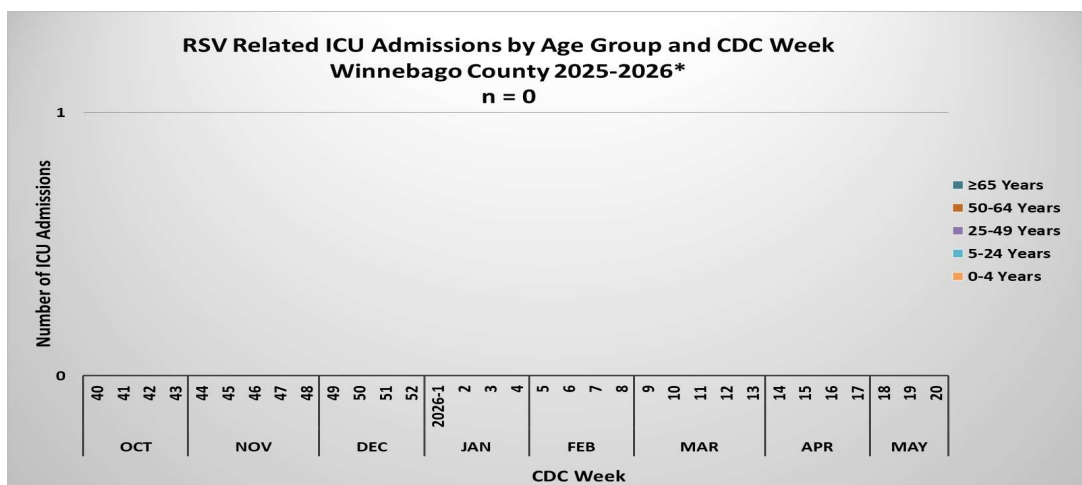
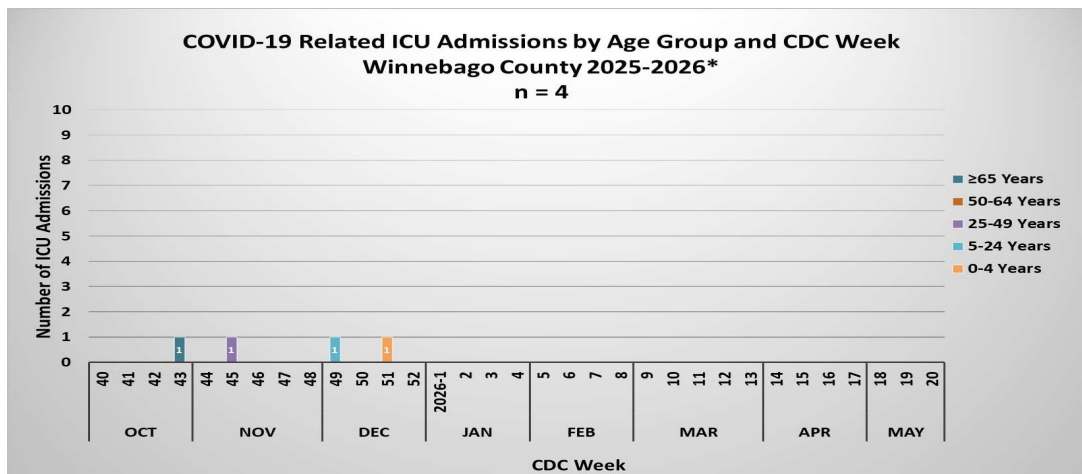
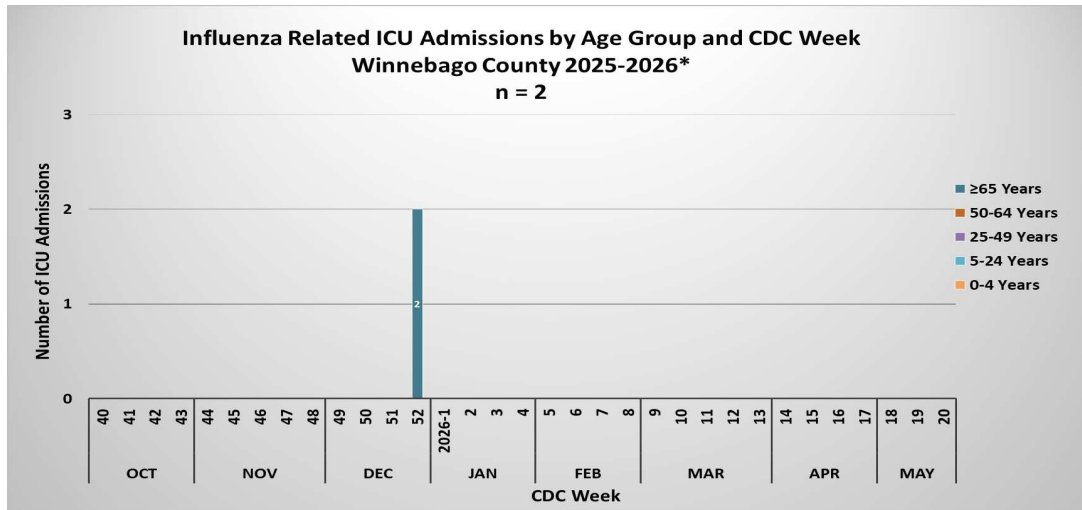
↑ The above graph illustrates the total number of flu cases reported during the current influenza surveillance period. The four year historical average for the County is noted by the orange line on the graph.

*Note: All data in this report are provisional and may change as additional reports are received.

ICU Admissions by Respiratory Illness

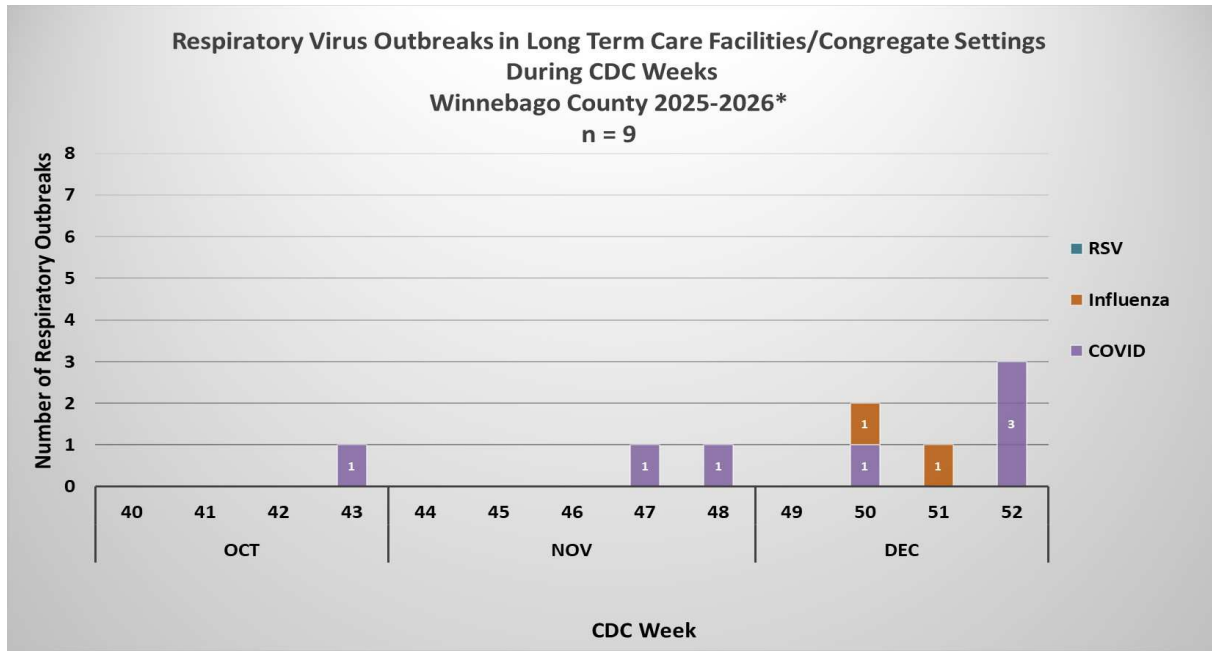
Respiratory virus associated Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Admissions:

The total number of ICU admissions by respiratory illness reported during the current respiratory surveillance period.



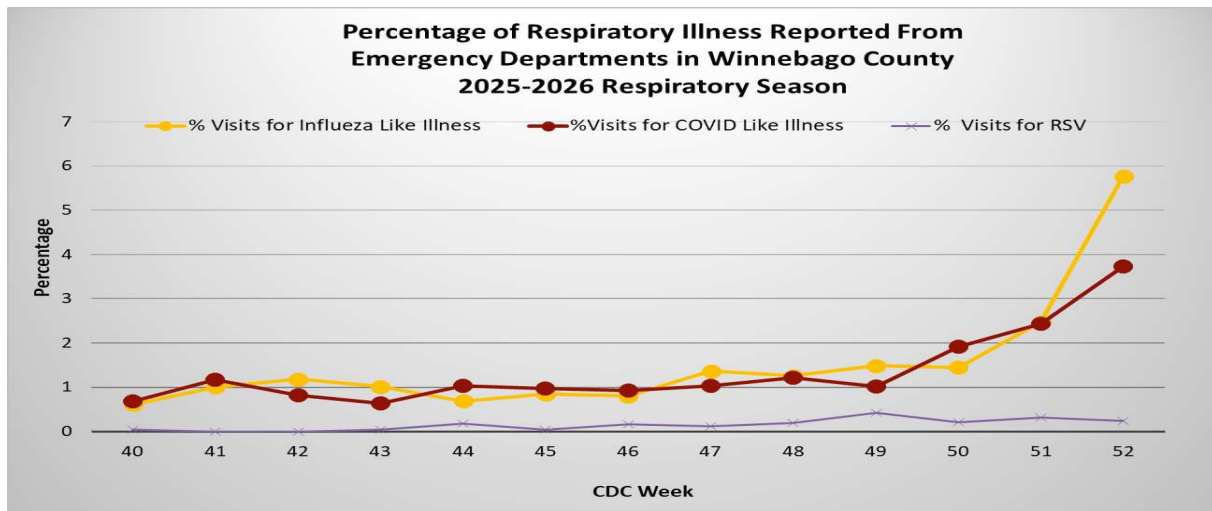
LTC Facility Outbreaks and ED Illness Surveillance

Respiratory Virus Outbreak Activity in Long Term Care Facilities: The Health Department uses surveillance data to monitor respiratory outbreaks in long term care facilities as part of the community's current activity with respiratory viruses. An outbreak is defined as three or more cases of a specific virus occurring within 72 hours of each other.



Percent of emergency department (ED) visits due to respiratory illness:

Percent of emergency department visits attributed to respiratory illness for residents of Winnebago County.



Practice and promote the three C's in helping prevent the spread of respiratory viruses in our community:

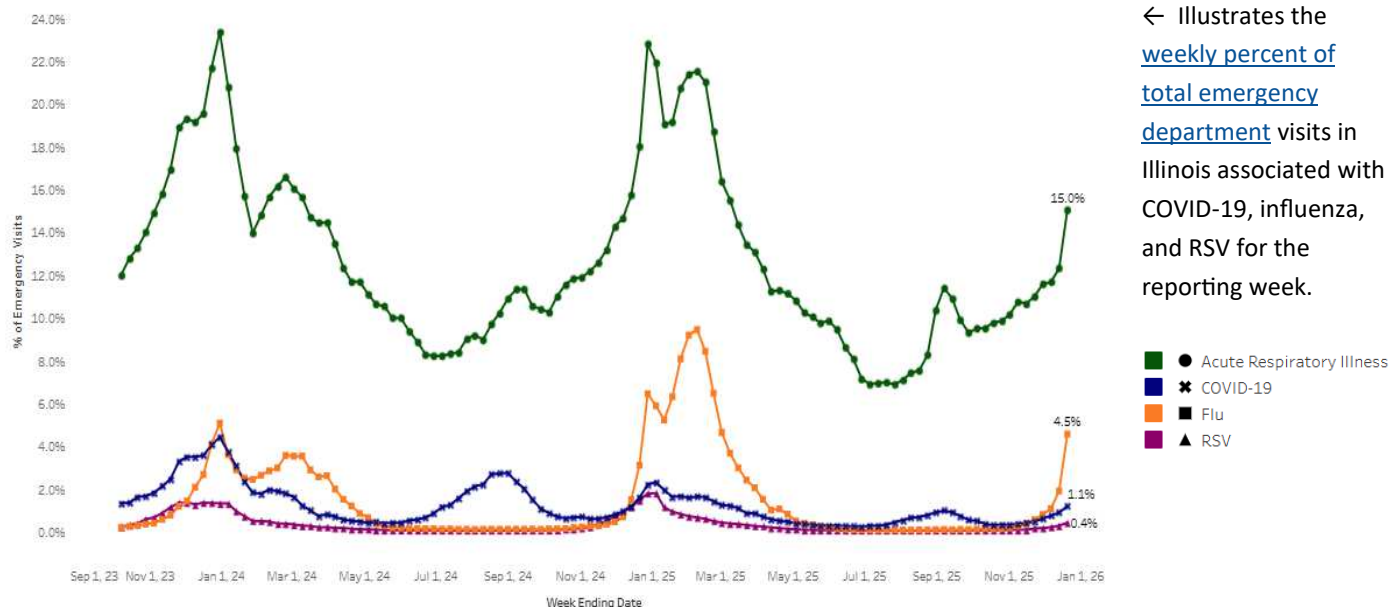
CLEAN - Wash your hands

COVER - Cover your cough and sneeze

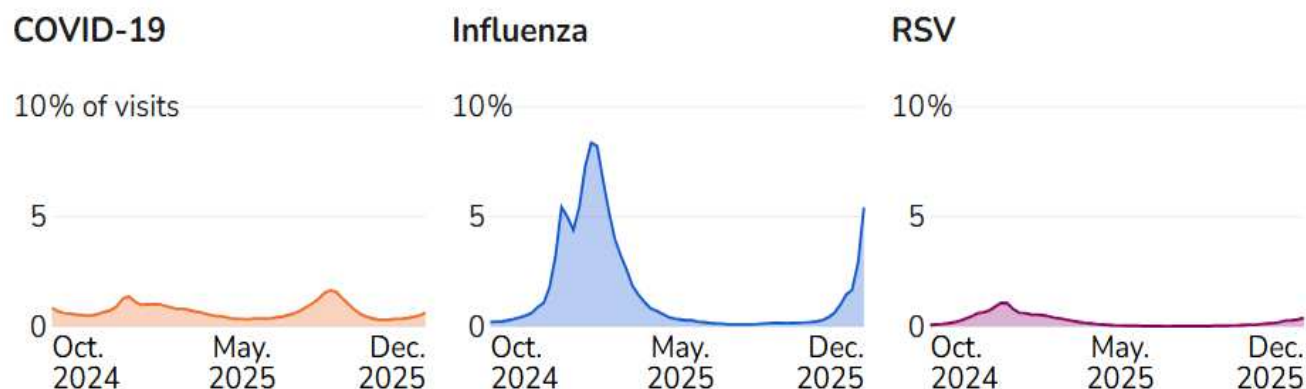
CONTAIN - Contain your germs, stay home if you are sick

State and National Respiratory Virus Activity

ED Visits: Percentages by Respiratory Condition in Illinois Facilities



Emergency Department Visits for Viral Respiratory Illness in the U.S.



↑ Illustrates the [national weekly percent of total emergency department](#) visits in the U.S. associated with COVID-19, influenza, and RSV for the reporting week.

Data was last updated on December 24, 2025 and presented through December 20, 2025.



publichealth.wincoil.gov/data-and-reports/data-and-charts/



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