

Winter Illness Update

Information for the General Public

Dec. 2022



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Some Common Germs This Time of Year

- COVID-19
- Influenza (flu)
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- Rhinovirus and Enterovirus: Can cause “The Common Cold”



Letter from American Academy of Pediatrics- MA Chapter & MA Dept. of Public Health

<https://www.mass.gov/news/dph-and-mass-chapter-of-american-academy-of-pediatrics-write-families-with-steps-to-prevent-respiratory-illness>



Massachusetts Chapter

INCORPORATED IN MASSACHUSETTS

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



November 1, 2022

“Dear Families,

The Commonwealth, the Northeast and much of the US are seeing increases in respiratory illness in infants and children. Some of these infants and children are requiring hospitalization for support with breathing and hydration. Emergency departments and other acute care health facilities have been managing significant increases in the number of patients requiring care.

Most of these illnesses are caused by respiratory viral infections, including common seasonal viruses like respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), rhinovirus and enterovirus, and influenza. Infants and children may be particularly susceptible to seasonal respiratory viral infections during the 2022-2023 fall and winter because they have had limited previous exposure to these respiratory viruses. We anticipate that there could be more respiratory illnesses as RSV continues to spread and influenza season ramps up.”



COVID-19

COVID-19: illness caused by the SARS-COV-2 virus, highly transmissible
Symptoms appear 2 to 14 days after exposure

Symptoms may include-

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of sense of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



Seasonal Influenza (Flu)

Influenza: Disease of the respiratory system caused by a virus.

Seasonal flu: occurs every winter season, beginning in fall and lasting through March.

Common symptoms may include-

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore Throat

Other symptoms may include-

- Body aches
- Chills
- Headache
- Runny Nose
- Fatigue



Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

RSV: A common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. More common in children and infants.

Symptoms generally include:

- Runny nose
- Decreased appetite
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing



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“The Common Cold”- Rhinovirus & Enterovirus

Rhinovirus: The usual culprit of “the common cold”

Symptoms generally include:

- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Headaches
- Body aches

Enterovirus: Usually causes mild illness, like “the common cold”

Symptoms generally include:

- Fever
- Runny Nose
- Sneezing
- Cough
- Skin Rash
- Mouth Blisters
- Body & Muscle Aches
- Many people are completely asymptomatic.



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What Makes These Illnesses “Seasonal”?



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Why Are Rates Higher Than Usual This Year?



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How Can We Lower the Risks for Ourselves, Our Families, and Communities?



1. Staying up-to-date on vaccines
2. Practice proper hand hygiene
3. Clean high-touch surfaces in your home frequently with household disinfectants
4. Follow isolation and quarantine guidelines
5. Wear a mask
6. Know your “personal risk profile” and community levels
7. Contact your provider if you think you or your child needs medical care
8. Self-Care: stay hydrated, eat nutritious food, and get plenty of rest



Stay Informed and Educated- Further Reading

COVID-19: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information>

Influenza: <https://www.mass.gov/influenza>

RSV: <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/index.html>

Rhinovirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/rhinoviruses/index.html>

Enterovirus: <https://www.cdc.gov/dotw/enteroviruses/index.html>



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Resources to Track Community Levels

COVID-19 Data:



- <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/index.html>

Flu Data:



- <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/weekly-flu-report>



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You can access more helpful information
regarding seasonal illness through our website
“Resources” page:

<https://www.nashoba.org/resources>

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Acknowledgements:



Nashoba Associated Boards of Health: *Serving the public health needs of Ashburnham, Ashby, Ayer, Berlin, Bolton, Boxborough, Dunstable, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Littleton, Lunenburg, Pepperell, Shirley, Stow, Townsend, and the community of Devens, in partnership with your local elected Board of Health.*



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