



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Viral Respiratory Diseases Weekly Report 2024-2025

Week Ending Saturday 12/21/2024

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December 26, 2024

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) produces a Weekly Viral Respiratory Diseases Report for clinicians. The report provides information on Influenza, COVID-19 and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) activity in the state. The report also compares activities in Arkansas to the U.S. ADH receives reports of only a fraction of COVID-19 cases and flu cases since it only requires reports of flu hospitalizations, deaths, and outbreaks. RSV is not a reportable disease in Arkansas. Therefore, it is important to understand that the information in the weekly update is representative of the timing and location of activity, but it does not reflect the overall disease burden. It is presumed that there are many more people actually affected than the report shows. Clinicians and policymakers may find the report helpful in terms of communicating to colleagues and patients about the current status of viral respiratory diseases in the state and nationwide.

Report Key Points for Week 51:

- Arkansas reported “High” or 10 out of 13 for the Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI) activity level indicator determined by data reported to ILINet.
- Hospital Emergency Department visits reported through Syndromic Surveillance were at 5.60% for Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI), 3.71% for COVID-Like-Illness (CLI), and 1.67% for Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).
- Outpatient visits for ILI reported through ILINet from the Sentinel Providers were at 5.42%.
- Arkansas Children’s Hospitals and associated clinic locations in central and northwest Arkansas report RSV test positivity over 25% and Mycoplasma pneumoniae test positivity at 7%.
- The average school absenteeism rate last week was 9.55% among public schools.
- Arkansas reported 5 influenza-related deaths this season, and a total of 136 deaths in 2023-24 season, including 1 pediatric. Of these, 66% were not vaccinated.
- Nationally, CDC estimates that there have been at least 1.9 million illnesses, 23,000 hospitalizations, and 970 deaths from flu so far this season.
- Arkansas reported no COVID-19-related deaths this week and a total of 761 deaths in 2023 and 484 since 01/01/2024. The weekly deaths reflect week reported or processed, not date of death.
- This flu season, 3 influenza outbreaks have been reported from nursing homes or other congregate setting institutions. In 2023-24, Arkansas investigated 41 outbreaks.
- Nationally, the proportion of deaths reported to the National Center for Health Statistics that were attributed to pneumonia, influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) was below the epidemic threshold this week.

You can report flu year-round and view the Viral Respiratory Disease Weekly Report during the influenza season at:
<http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/influenza>. You can also access the reporting website directly at:
<https://FluReport.ADH.Arkansas.gov>.

For additional national and international influenza and other respiratory diseases surveillance information:

World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/tools/flunet>

CDC - Seasonal influenza (Flu) - Weekly Report: <https://www.cdc.gov/fluview/index.html>

Other respiratory viruses: visit the national respiratory and enteric virus surveillance system (NREVSS):
<https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/nrevss/index.html>

2024-2025 Viral Respiratory Diseases Weekly Report (Week 51: 12/15/2024 – 12/21/2024)

Deaths Reported for Week 51*

* Deaths reflect week reported not date of death.

- Deaths from all causes: 722
- Deaths due to Pneumonia: 66
- Deaths due to Flu: 2
- COVID-19 Related Deaths: 0

Cumulative Deaths

- Total Flu deaths since 09/29/24: 5
- Total COVID deaths in 2023: 761
- Total COVID deaths since 01/01/24: 484

New Hospital Admissions

- Flu Week ending 12/21/2024: 32
- COVID Week ending 12/21/2024: 33

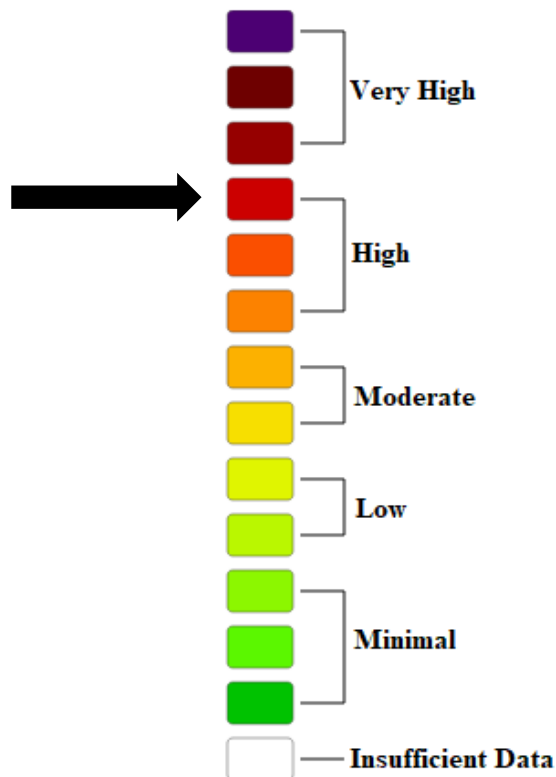
School Absenteeism*

* Average daily absenteeism for all public schools during this reporting week.

Week Ending: 12/21/2024

- Percent Absent: 9.55
- Previous Week: 7.32

Weekly Arkansas ILI Intensity Level Reported by Sentinel Providers



Lab Confirmed Influenza Cases

Reported flu cases reflect only a portion of the actual numbers of flu cases in the state.

Tests	Week 51	Cumulative Cases Since 09/29/2024
Flu A+	195	733
Flu B+	30	406
Flu A and B	3	35
Flu B/Victoria	0	0
Flu B/ Yamagata	0	0
Flu A, H1N1+	6	16
Flu A, H3+	6	20
Unsubtypeable	0	0
Total	240	1,210

Influenza Reported Hospitalization and Death Cumulative Cases Since 09/29/2024

Age Groups	Hospitalized	Deaths
0-4 yr.	3	0
5-17 yr.	2	0
18-24 yr.	2	0
25-44 yr.	2	1
45-64 yr.	23	1
>= 65 yr.	38	3
Unknown	0	0
Total	70	5

ER Visits (Syndromic Surveillance)

Week Ending: 12/21/2024:

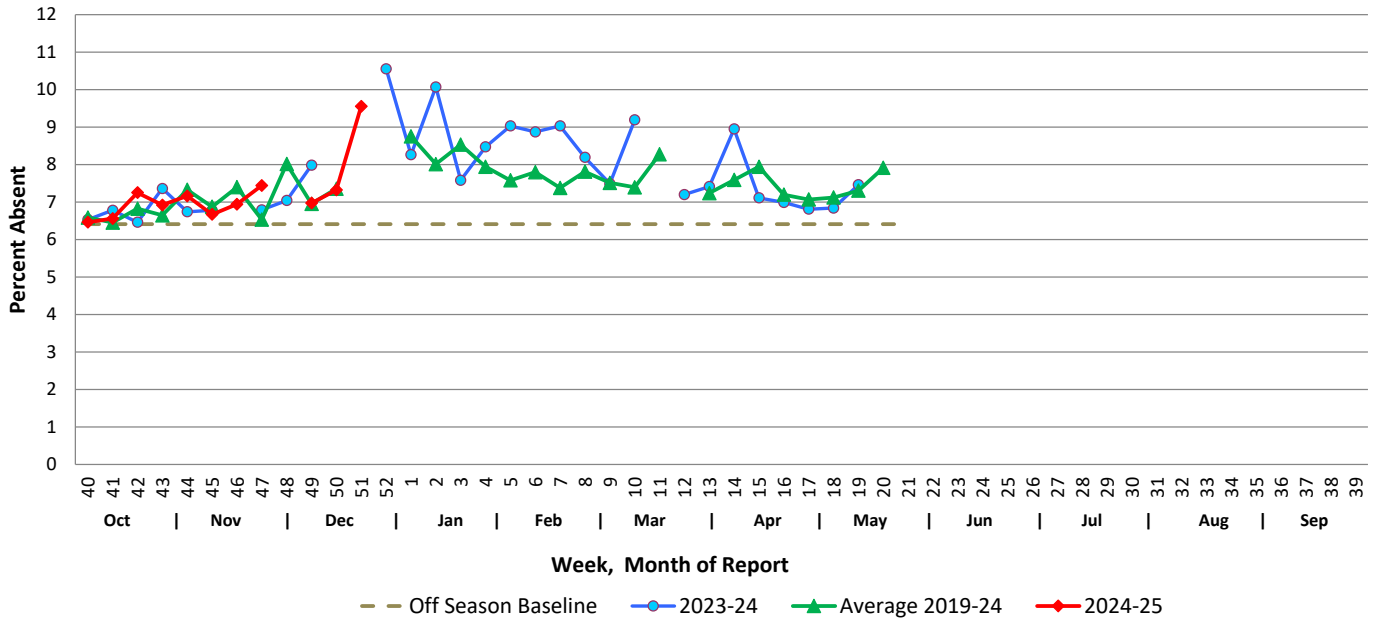
- Total (% of Visits)
- Total ER Visits: 12,248
 - Visits with ILI: 686 (5.60%)
 - Visits with CLI: 455 (3.71%)
 - Visits with RSV: 204 (1.67%)

Previous Week:

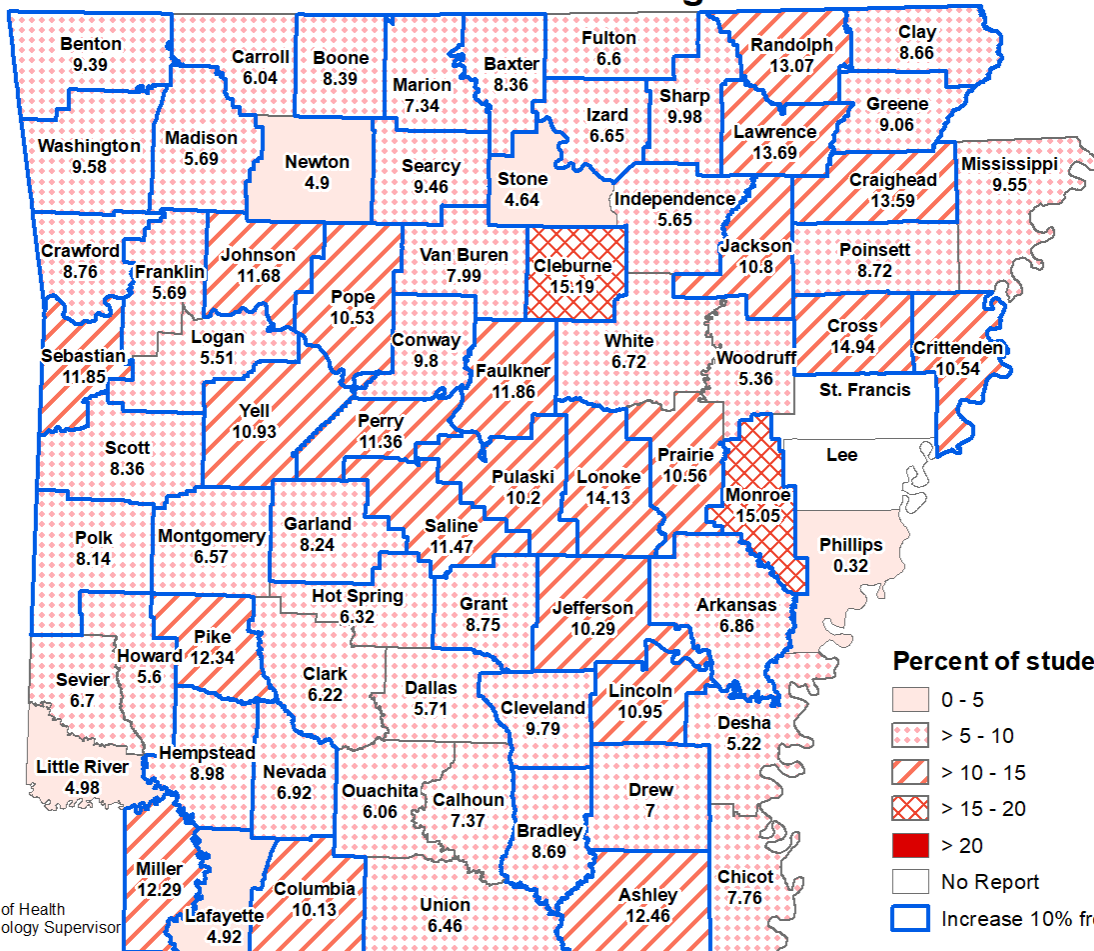
- Total (% of Visits)
- Total ER Visits: 11,389
 - Visits with ILI: 463 (4.07%)
 - Visits with CLI: 263 (2.31%)
 - Visits with RSV: 132 (1.16%)

School Report

Weekly School Absenteeism Rates, Arkansas Public Schools



School Absenteeism Rate per County, Arkansas 2024-2025 Percent Absent for Week Ending 12/21/2024



Percent of students absent

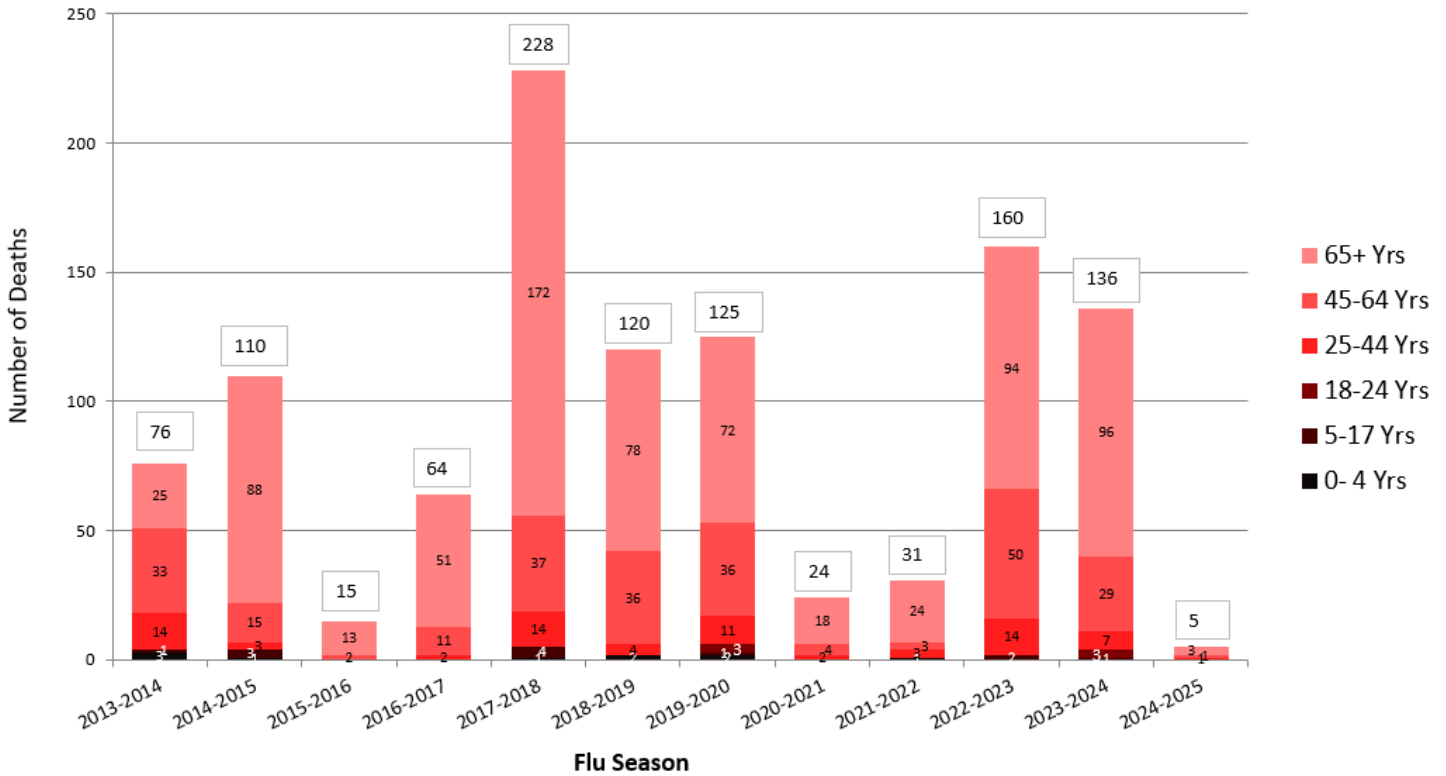
- 0 - 5
- > 5 - 10
- > 10 - 15
- > 15 - 20
- > 20
- No Report
- Increase 10% from Previous Rate



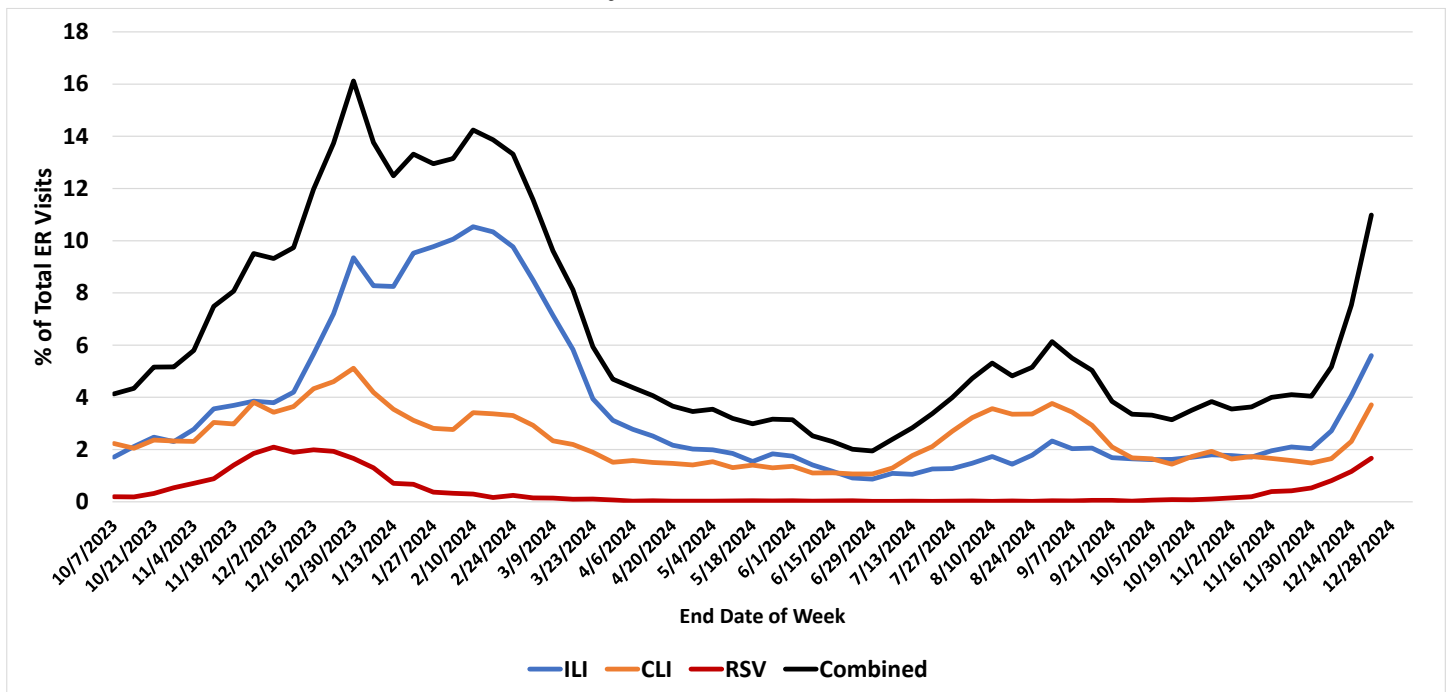
Date: December 26, 2024
 Source: Arkansas Department of Health
 Author: Haytham Safi, Epidemiology Supervisor

Influenza Mortality by Age Group, Arkansas 2013-2025 (Provisional)

Report Updated: 12/26/2024

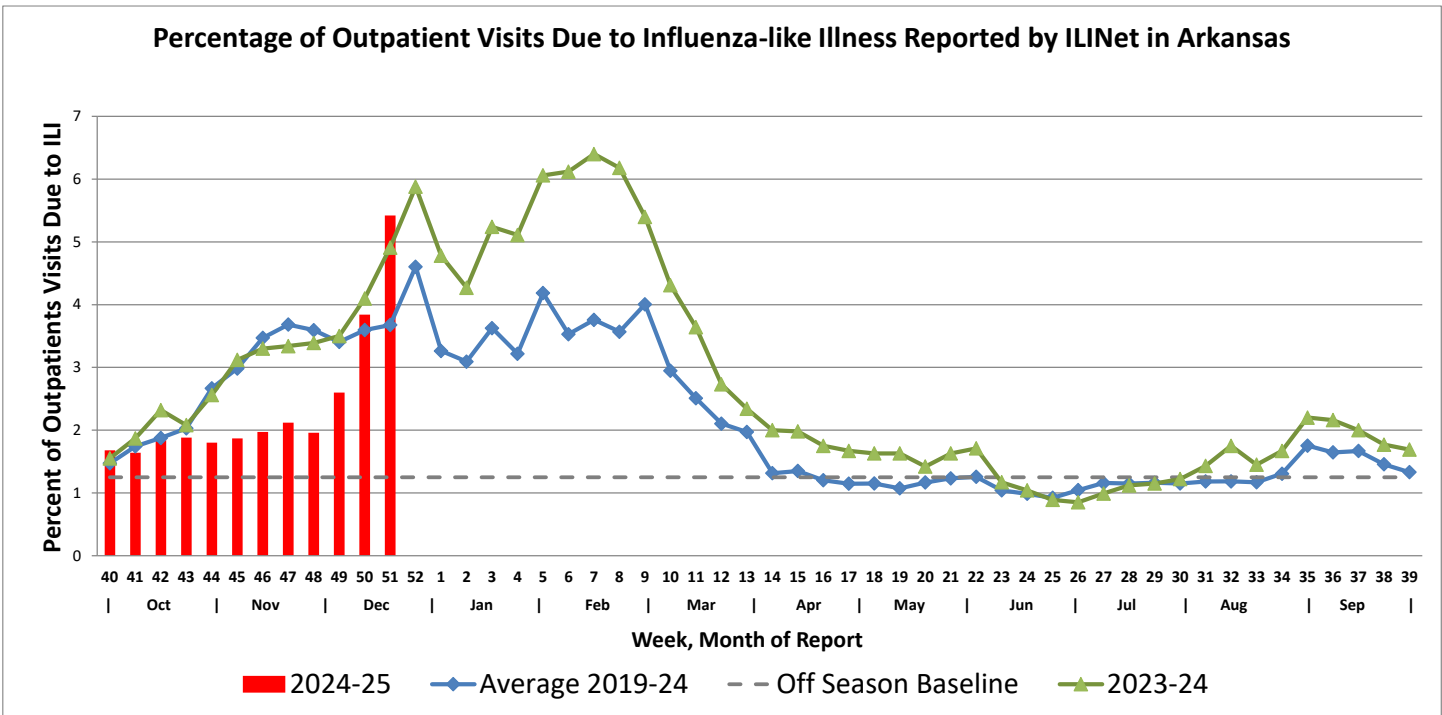


Emergency Department Visits for ILI, CLI and RSV, Arkansas Data Downloaded from NSSP (Syndromic Surveillance)

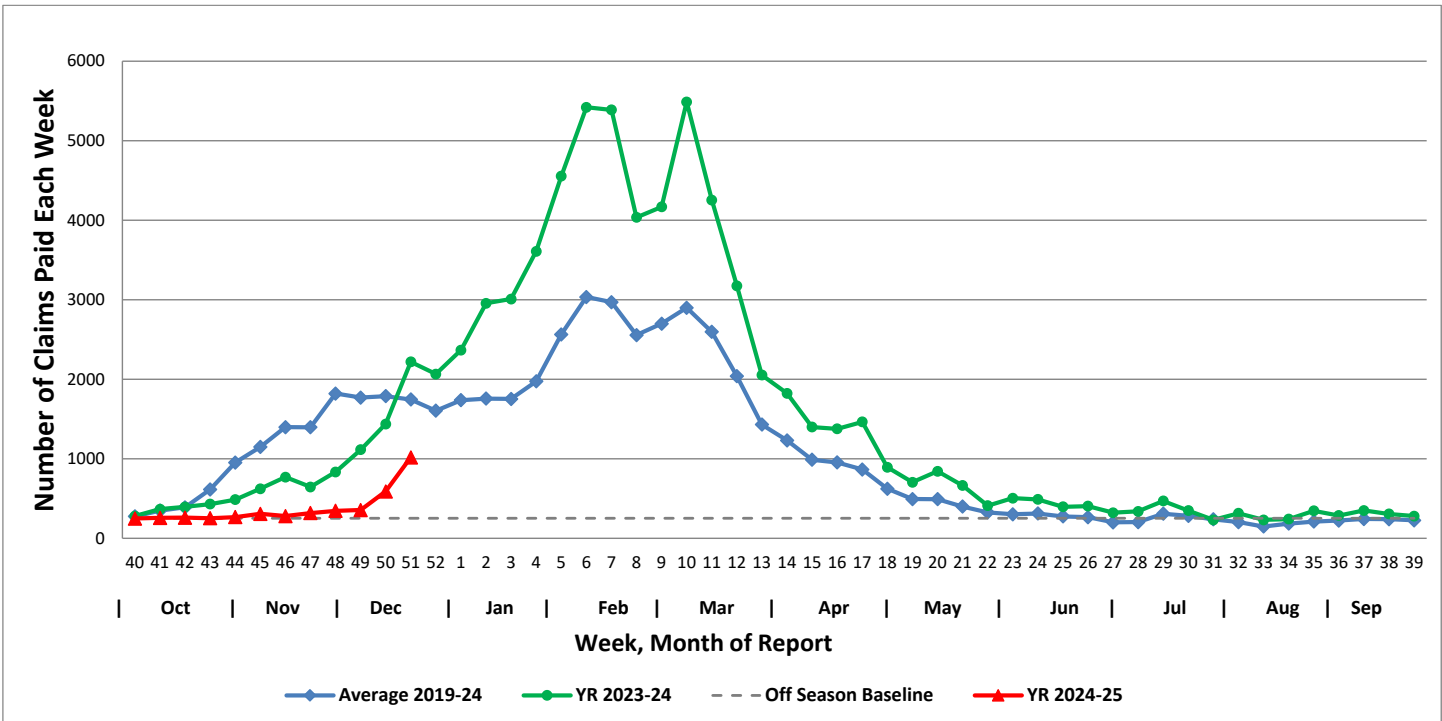


Arkansas Subset of US Outpatient Influenza Surveillance (ILINET)

Percentage of Outpatient Visits Due to Influenza-like Illness Reported by ILINet in Arkansas

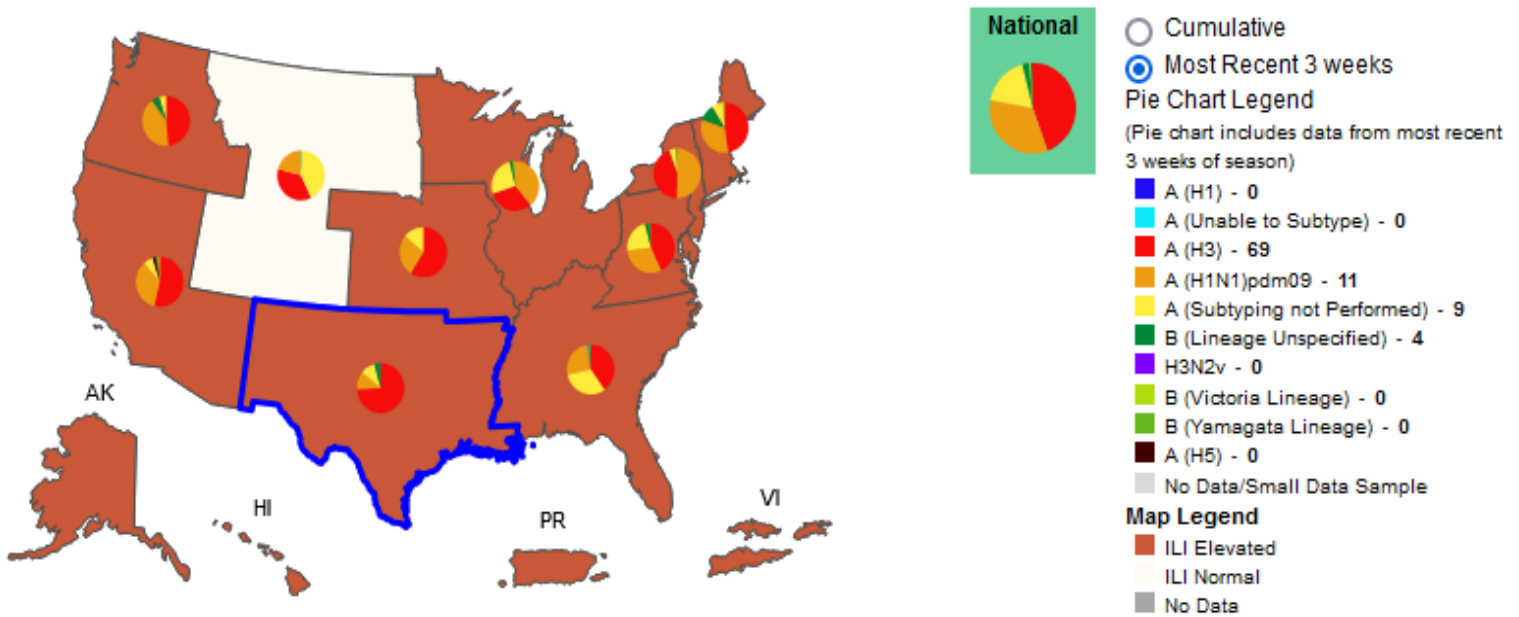


Weekly Influenza Claims Paid by Medicaid and BCBS of Arkansas



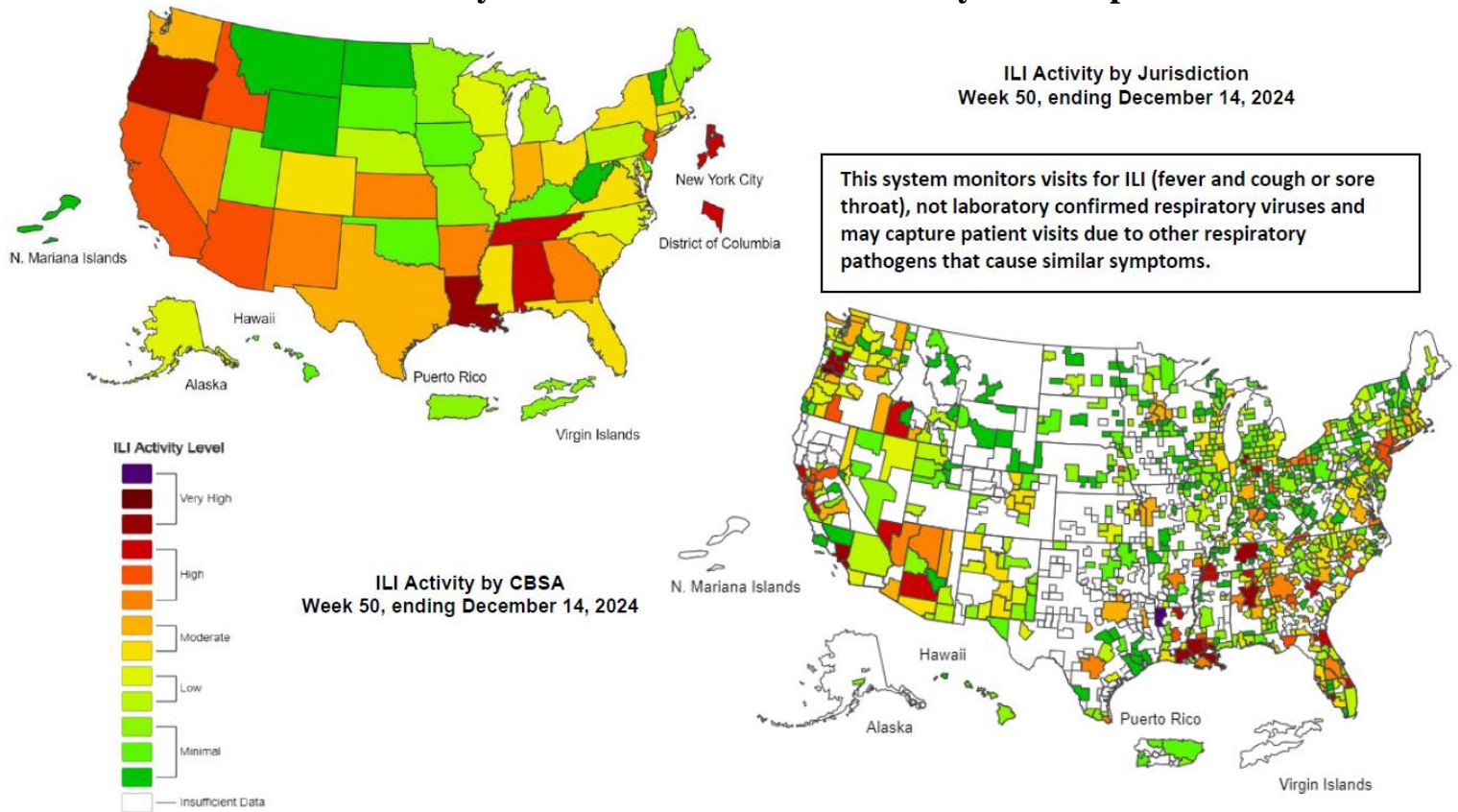
Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC and ILI Activity, by HHS Region Public Health Labs, Week Ending Dec 14, 2024

Values in legend are for the highlighted HHS region (Region 6) for the most recent 3 weeks.



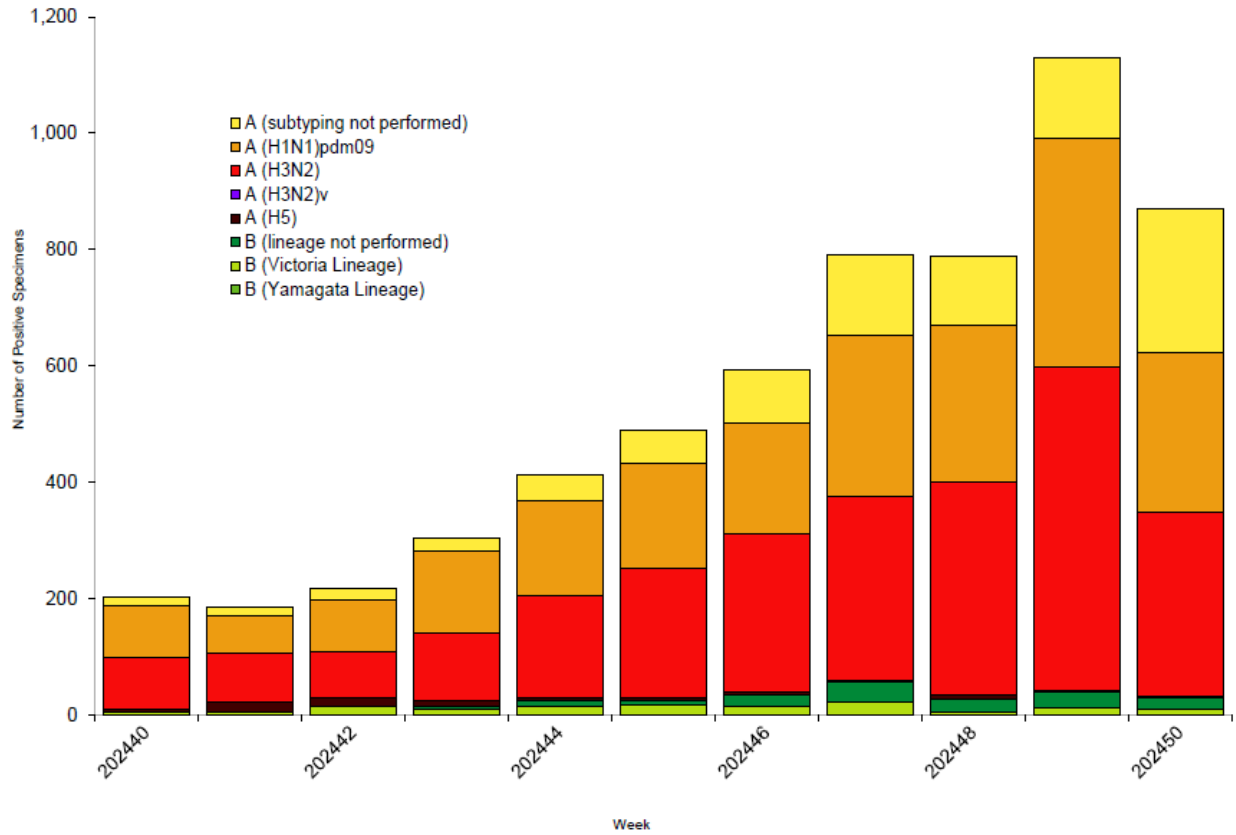
Data Source: CDC, ILINet

Influenza-Like-Illness Activity Level Indicator Determined by Data Reported to ILINet

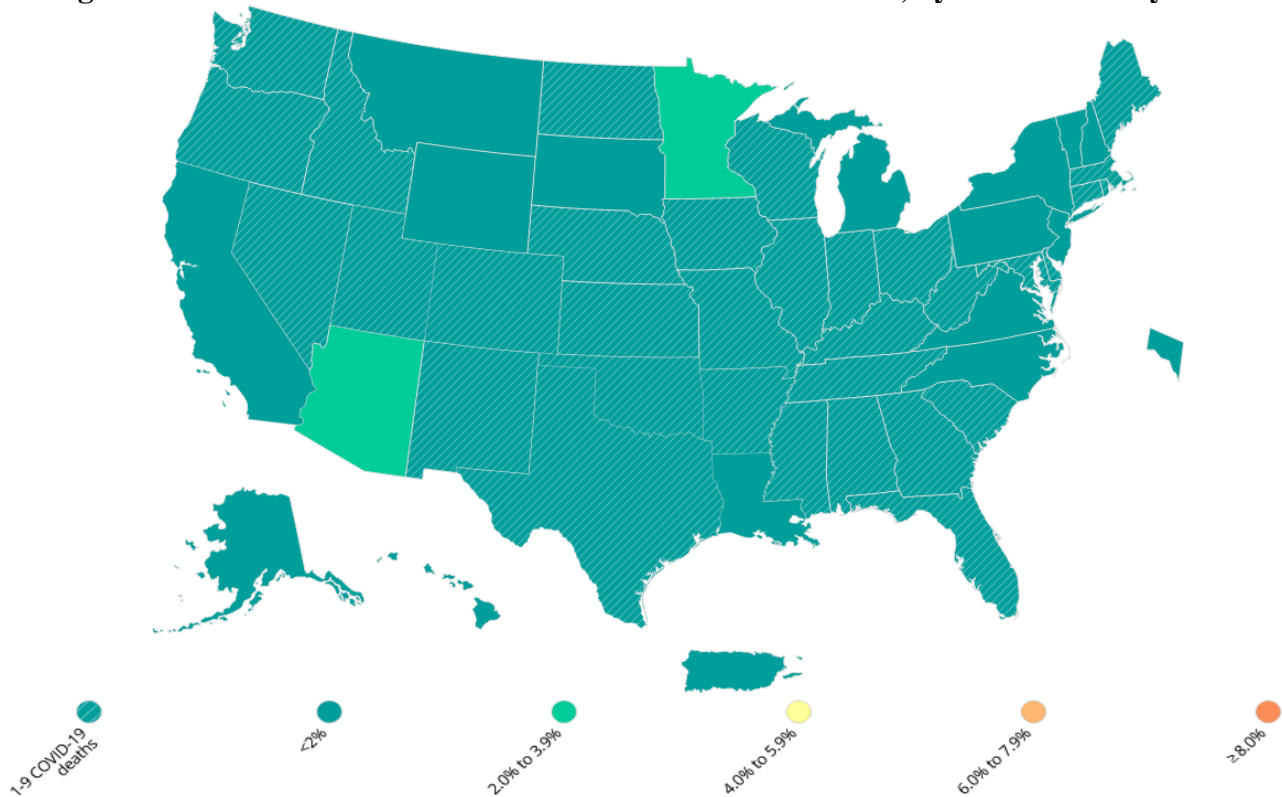


Data Source: CDC, ILINet

Influenza Positive Tests Reported to CDC by U.S. Public Health Laboratories, National Summary, 2024-2025 Season, week ending December 14, 2024

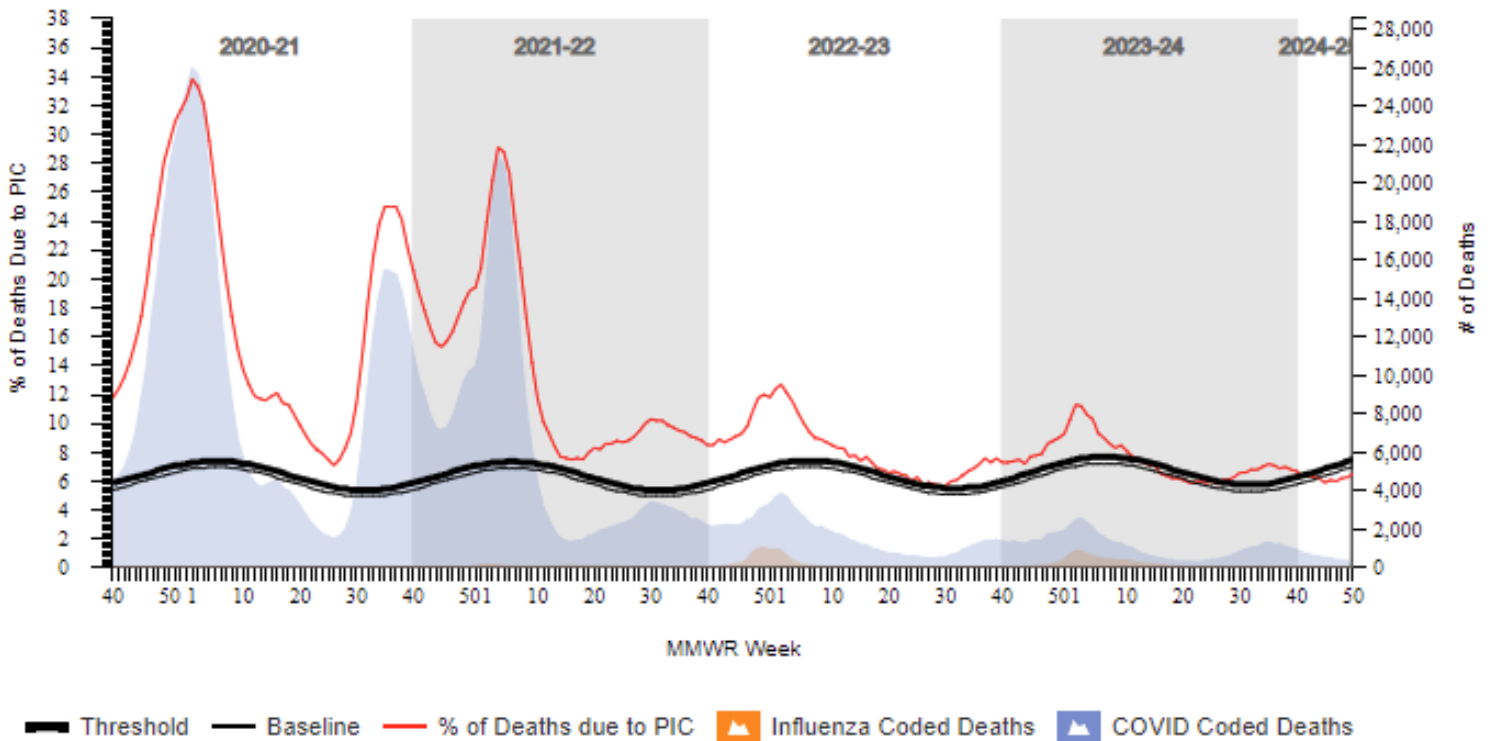


Percentage of Provisional Deaths Due to COVID-19 in the Past Week, by State/Territory – United States

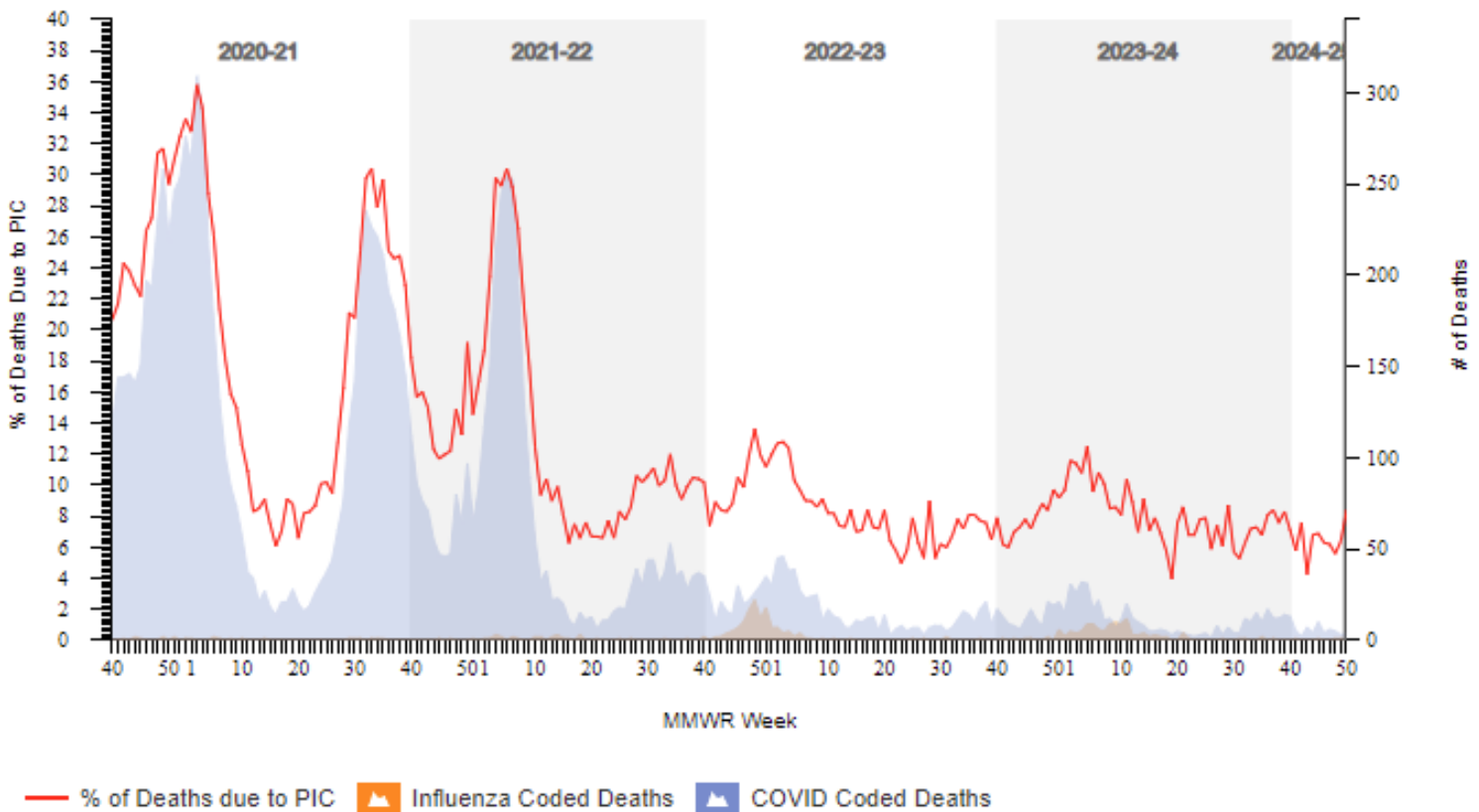


Source: https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#maps_percent-covid-deaths

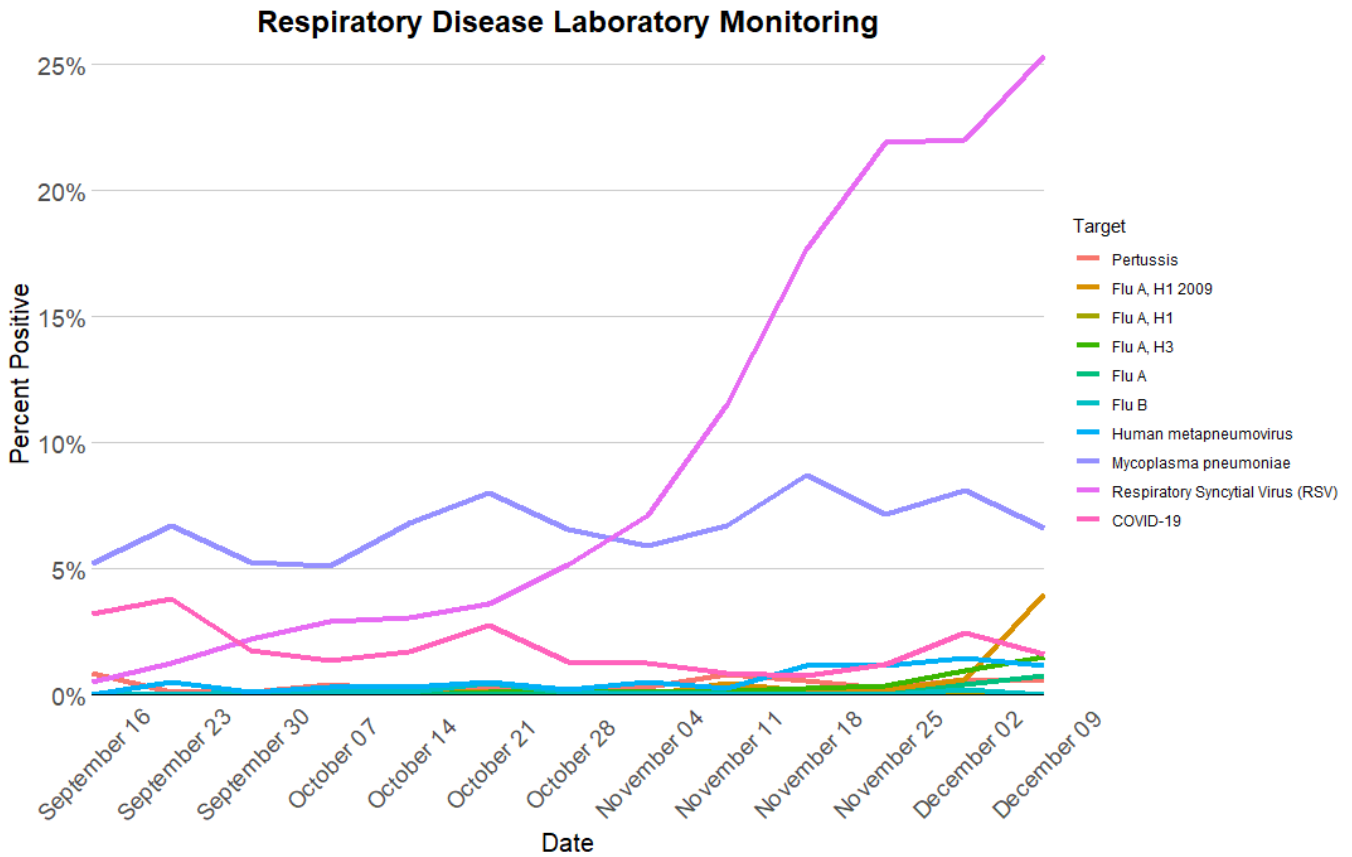
Pneumonia, Influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) Mortality from the National Center for Health Statistics Mortality Surveillance System Data as of Dec 19, 2024, National Data



Pneumonia, Influenza and COVID-19 (PIC) Mortality from the National Center for Health Statistics Mortality Surveillance System Data as of Dec 19, 2024, Arkansas Data



Respiratory Diseases Trend in Children seen at Arkansas Children’s Hospitals



The figure above shows the trends over time in percent positivity for certain respiratory diseases in children seen at Arkansas Children’s Hospital located in Little Rock and Arkansas Children’s Northwest in Springdale as well as the Arkansas Children’s clinics located around the state. Percent positivity is defined as the total number of positive tests for a particular respiratory disease divided by the total number of tests done for that same disease multiplied by 100. The figure shows that positivity for RSV began increasing sharply in October and is currently over 25%. Mycoplasma pneumoniae is the second most common respiratory disease, currently at 7%. Influenza, COVID, Pertussis and Human metapneumovirus all show minimal/low level.