

Flu Snapshot 2022-2023

Week 4: January 22, 2023 – January 28, 2023

Summary: This report provides a snapshot of seasonal flu activity in Alaska. Additional information about influenza is available on the Section of Epidemiology's (SOE) influenza page: <https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/influenza/fluinfo.aspx>. Information about influenza vaccination coverage of Alaska residents is available at this link: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/d02efa20d1df453a9a7f400b090f4251>. A

detailed review of CDC influenza surveillance indicators is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/overview.htm>.

Figure One: Lab-confirmed cases comparison with previous seasons

The **2022- 2023 Flu Season** was showing substantial increases in influenza activity. This was earlier in the season than some previous years. Activity has been trending down mimicking the rest of the US. Influenza testing and case reporting practices during the current influenza season are likely different compared to practices that existed during influenza seasons before COVID-19 pandemic. Interpretations of influenza case data should focus on trends and the timing of influenza activity rather than on comparing the number of reported cases across seasons.

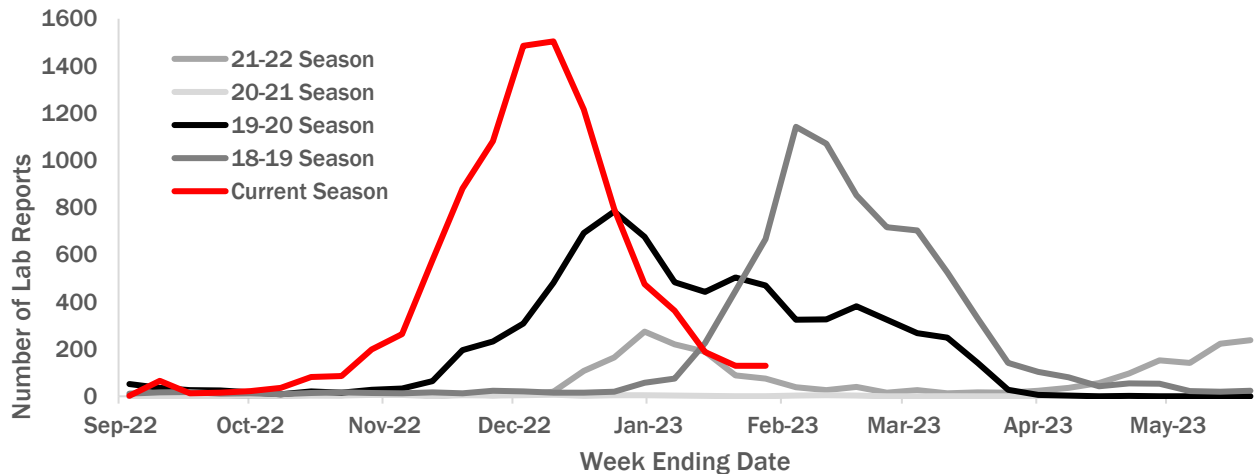
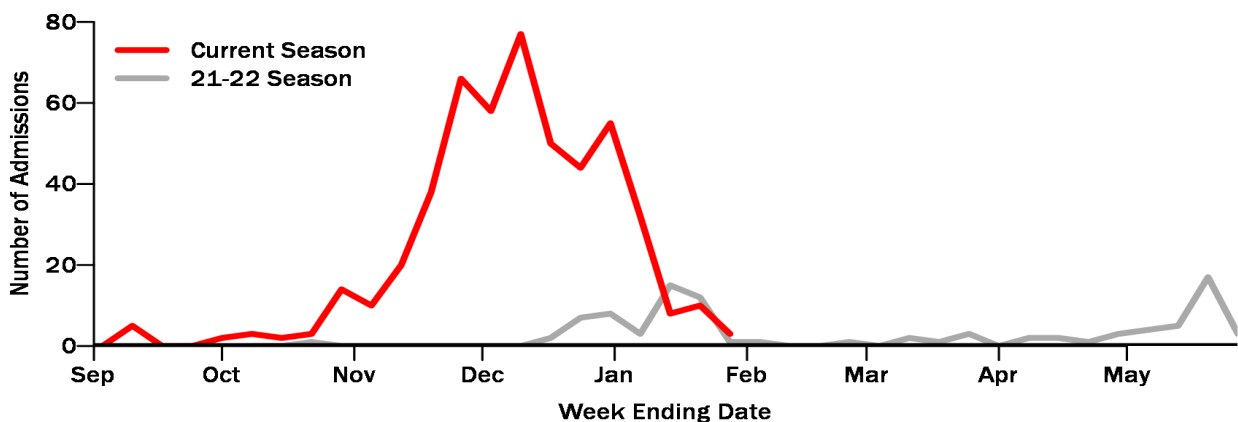


Figure Two: Hospital admissions comparison with previous season

Data for influenza-related hospital admissions started being tracked during the COVID-19 pandemic through the [Unified Hospital Data Surveillance System](#). Compared to 21-22, there are dramatically more hospital admissions for the 22-23 season so far.



Updated 02/01/2023

Figure Three: Lab-confirmed case numbers

Seasonal influenza activity is elevated across all of Alaska. An annual flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu. Vaccination helps prevent infection and can also prevent serious outcomes in people who get vaccinated but still get sick with flu. CDC recommends that everyone ages 6 months and older get a flu vaccine annually. Now is a good time to get vaccinated

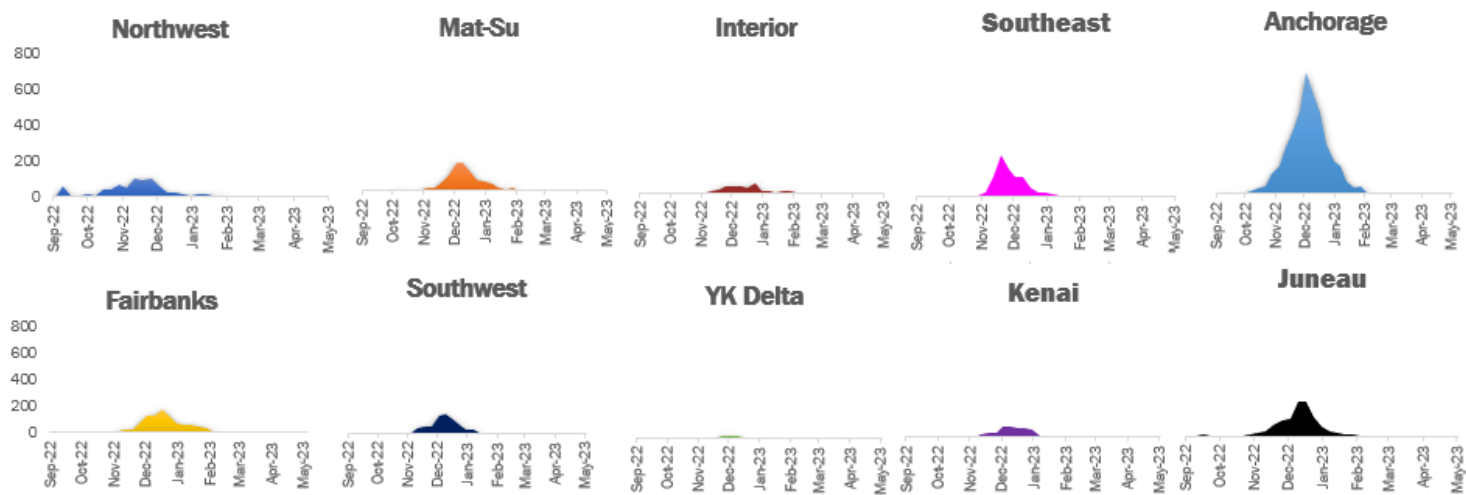
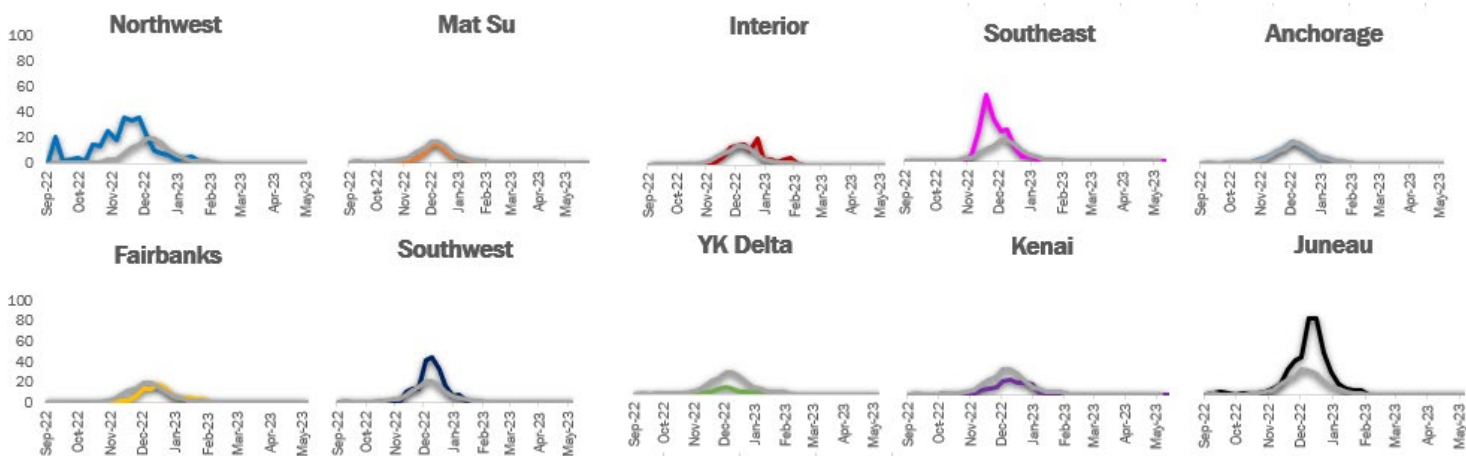


Figure Four: Lab-confirmed case rates per 10,000 people

Rates of influenza cases in all regions are trending down. It looks as though the peak was seen in the month of December for most regions.



Important notes: 1) Cases are assigned by date of onset, diagnosis, or report — whichever is earliest; therefore, case counts may be updated as new data become available. 2) By national convention, cases are assigned by patient residence. For influenza cases when residence is not specified, cases are assigned to the location of the health care provider. 3) Areas with low or no case counts may reflect absence of testing rather than absence of disease. 4) Rapid influenza tests may give false positive or false negative results. PCR testing is recommended for confirmation.

Figure Five: Lab-confirmed flu types

There are two types of flu virus, **Influenza A** and **Influenza B**. Influenza A typically peaks earlier and causes more illness than Influenza B, just like we are seeing this year.

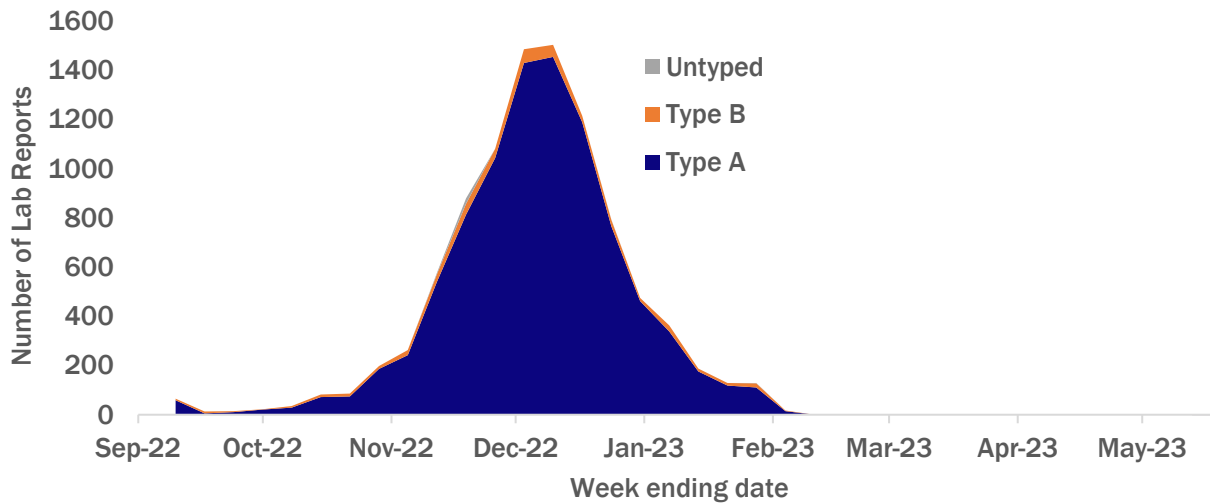


Figure Six: Influenza-like illness (syndromic surveillance)

Not everyone who has the flu gets tested for influenza, even if they see a health care provider. SOE monitors the number of people with symptoms compatible with flu, called “influenza-like illness” (ILI), in outpatient settings. It is normal for there to be some people with ILI year round (indicated by the **baseline**), but when influenza begins to circulate widely in the population, the **proportion of people with ILI** will increase rapidly. This information helps us estimate how much flu might be circulating but that might not have been captured by laboratory testing. More widespread, increased influenza, and likely other respiratory pathogen, activity is now pushing the proportion above the baseline.



Note: ILI data are reported to CDC’s ILINet program by a mixture of primary care providers and emergency departments. This graph shows the proportion of visits where the patient had influenza-like illness out of all visits to the reporting healthcare facility.

Updated 02/01/2023