



Public Health

W. BRIAN BYRD, M.D., Local Health Authority & Health Director

CATHERINE A. COLQUITT, M.D., Medical Director

Tarrant County Influenza Surveillance Activity Summary

October 2023 – May 2024

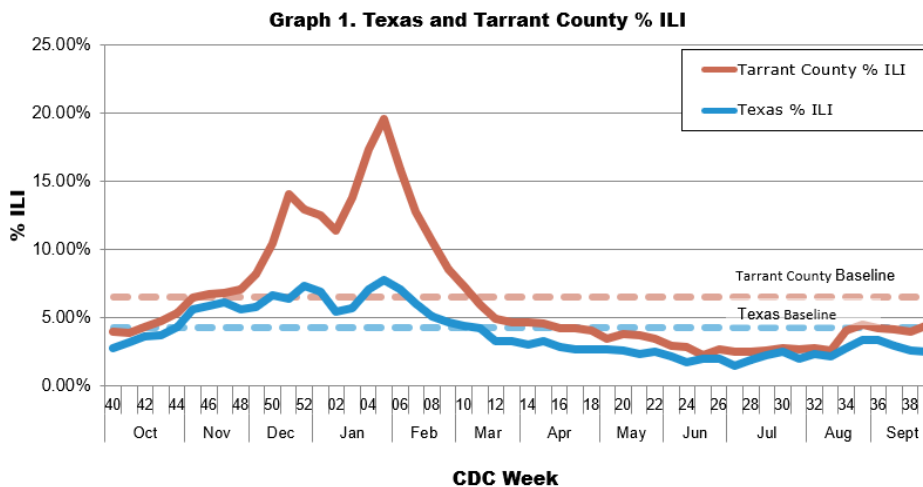
Dan Luong, MPH, Flu Surveillance Specialist

What was the 2023-2024 influenza season like?

The 2023-2024 influenza season began on October 1, 2023, and ended on May 18, 2024. Tarrant County influenza activity in the 2023-2024 influenza season peaked in late January/early February, which was later in the influenza season compared to the 2022-2023 season. There was also a smaller peak in the middle of December. During the 2023-2024 season, activity was at or above the Tarrant County baseline for 18 consecutive weeks. The first week that influenza activity was at or above Tarrant County baseline was CDC Week 45 (November 5-11, 2023) and the last week was CDC Week 10 (March 3-9, 2024).

When did the 2023-2024 influenza season peak?

Tarrant County influenza activity peaked during CDC Week 5 (January 28-February 3, 2024). The influenza-like illness (ILI) for Tarrant County during CDC Week 5 was 19.6%, which was well above the Tarrant County baseline of 6.5%. Tarrant County influenza activity also had a smaller peak during CDC Week 51 (December 17-23, 2023), in which the ILI was 14.0%. Texas influenza activity peaked the same week as Tarrant County, during CDC Week 5 (January 28-February 3, 2024). The ILI for Texas during CDC Week 5 was 7.8%, which was also above the Texas ILI baseline of 4.3%. Student absenteeism due to ILI in Tarrant County peaked during CDC Week 5. Tarrant County only experienced 2 peaks in influenza activity while Texas experienced 4 peaks in influenza activity during the 2023-2024 influenza season.

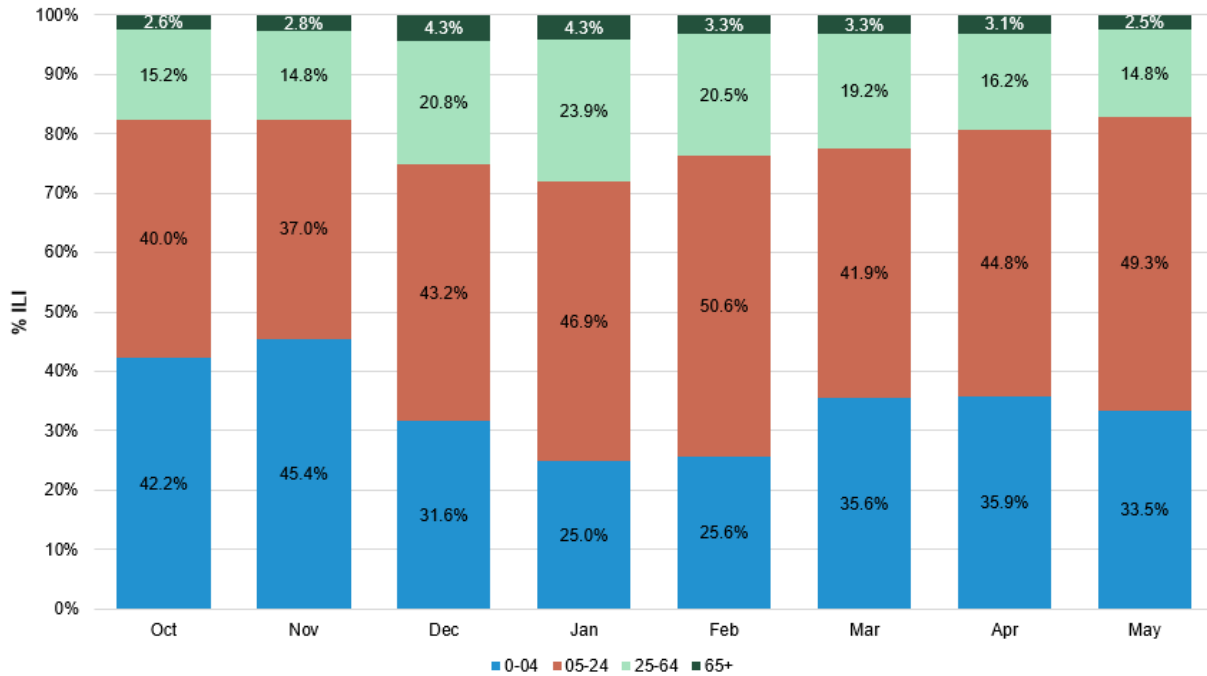


Data obtained from the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE). Tarrant County ILI data reflects participating hospitals and urgent cares within Tarrant County. Texas ILI data obtained from DSHS Texas Respiratory Virus Surveillance Reports.

What age groups had the highest reported ILI numbers this season?

Throughout the 2023-2024 influenza season, the number of reported ILI was generally highest among 5-24 year olds. Individuals 5 to 24 years of age accounted for the majority of ILI in December, January, February, March, April, and May. The number of reported ILI among individuals 65 years and older was consistently lower than that of any other age groups. During January and February, the peak of influenza activity, 9,522 and 8,709 individuals between the ages of 5 and 24 experienced ILI, respectively.

Graph 2. Number of ILI by Age Group Reported by Tarrant County, 2023-2024

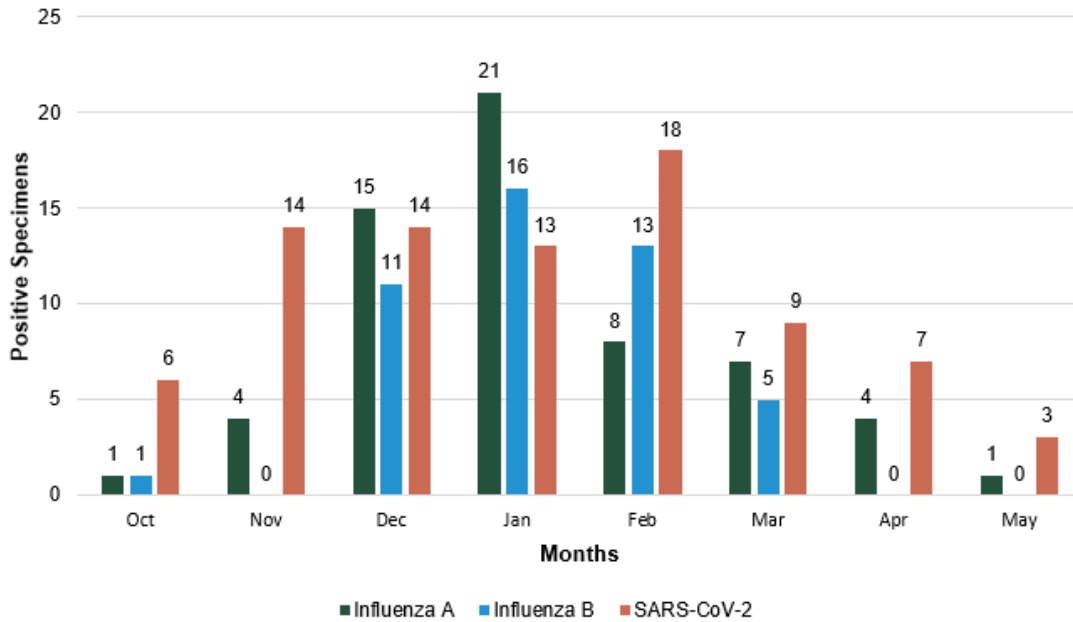


Data obtained from the Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics (ESSENCE). Tarrant County ILI data reflects participating hospitals and urgent cares within Tarrant County.

What viruses circulated this season in Tarrant County?

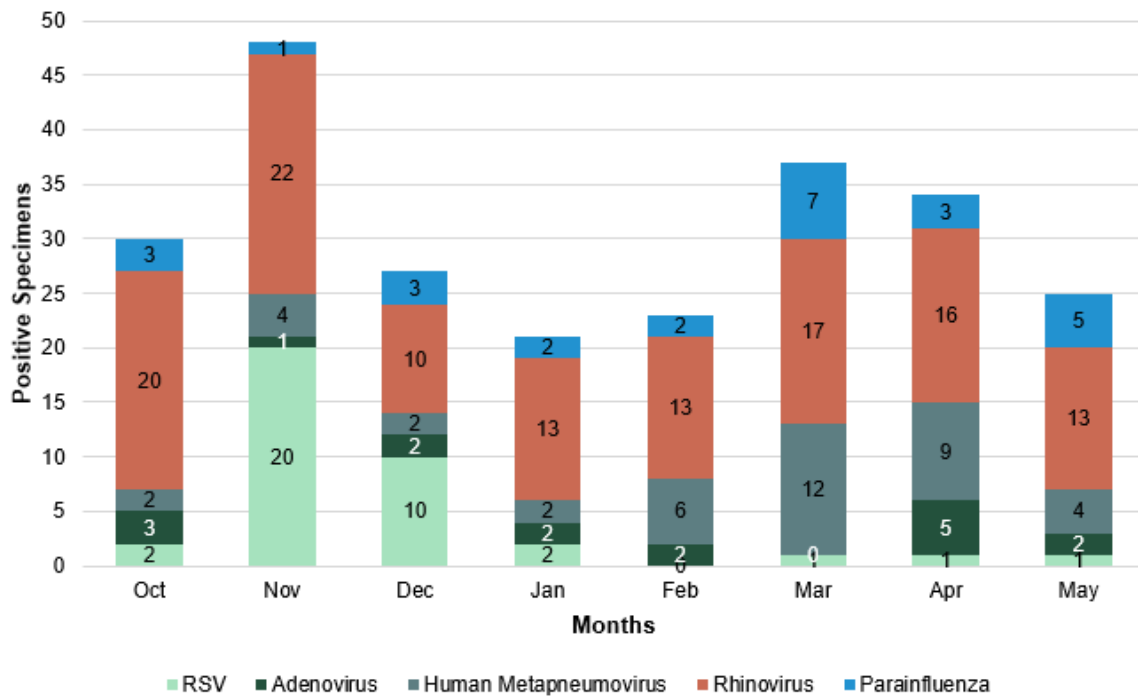
684 specimens were submitted during the 2023-2024 season for testing to the North Texas Regional Laboratory (NTRL). Approximately 27.9% of specimens submitted to NTRL were positive for either influenza A, influenza B, or COVID-19. Of the 107 total positive influenza specimens, 61 specimens were positive for influenza A (57.0%) and 46 specimens were positive for influenza B (43.0%). Of the 61 total positive influenza A specimens, 37 specimens subtyped for influenza A/H1N1 (60.7%), 23 specimens subtyped for influenza A/H3N2 (37.7%), and 1 specimen had an inconclusive subtype (1.6%). Of the 46 total positive influenza B specimens, 34 specimens subtyped for influenza B/Victoria (73.9%) and 12 specimens had an inconclusive subtype (26.1%). Additionally, of the 684 specimens submitted, 245 specimens were positive for at least one of the following respiratory viruses: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Adenovirus, Human Metapneumovirus, Parainfluenza-1, Parainfluenza-2, Parainfluenza-3, Parainfluenza-4, or Rhinovirus).

Graph 3. Influenza and COVID-19



Data obtained from respiratory specimens submitted from 3 participating hospitals within Tarrant County. Specimens were tested and reported by the North Texas Regional Laboratory (NTRL).

Graph 4. RSV, Adenovirus, Human Metapneumovirus, Rhinovirus, and Parainfluenzas



Data obtained from respiratory specimens submitted from 3 participating hospitals within Tarrant County. Specimens were tested and reported by the North Texas Regional Laboratory (NTRL).

What ongoing program or activities does Tarrant County conduct?

As in previous years, the Tarrant County Public Health Influenza Surveillance Program continues to conduct year-round influenza surveillance including influenza-like illness surveillance in schools and syndromic surveillance. Additionally, NTRL conducts tests on submitted specimens for influenza (by subtype) as well as for COVID-19, RSV, adenovirus, human metapneumovirus, rhinovirus, and parainfluenza (type 1, 2, 3, and 4). To obtain updates on respiratory diseases within Tarrant County, visit <https://www.tarrantcountytx.gov/en/public-health/public-health-administration/health-data-and-information/infectious-disease/respiratory-diseases.html>. If your facility would like to partner with our program as a sentinel provider site or weekly data reporter, contact Dan Luong at (682) 312-3144.

What can be expected for the 2024-2025 influenza season?

The week beginning September 29, 2024, marks the beginning of the 2024-2025 influenza season. Influenza season will end May 17, 2025. Predicting the exact timing of influenza activity and which strains will dominate remains challenging. The expected ILI baseline for Tarrant County is 6.5%. The updated composition of influenza vaccines is expected to be trivalent rather than quadrivalent like in past years. The vaccines will no longer contain the influenza B/Yamagata component as the influenza B/Yamagata virus has not been detected globally since March 2020. The updated composition of influenza vaccines will contain the following components:

Egg-based vaccines¹:

- An A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- An A/Thailand/9/2022 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- A B/Austria/135941/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus

Cell- or recombinant-based vaccines¹:

- An A/Wisconsin/67/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- An A/Massachusetts/18/2022 (H3N2)-like virus;
- A B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus

What are the influenza vaccination recommendations for the 2024-2025 season?

According to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), routine annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged ≥ 6 months who do not have contraindications². Vaccinations should be ideally offered during September or October². Persons who are or who might be pregnant during the influenza season should receive the influenza vaccine².

For detailed recommendations and information about different influenza vaccines available and their specific recommendations and precautions, please visit the CDC influenza webpage or contact Dan Luong, *Tarrant County Public Health Flu Surveillance Specialist* at dqluong@tarrantcountytx.gov.

1. 2024-2025 Flu Season – Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 March 2024

2. Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) – United States. 2024-25. 09 September 2024