

Submitted by E. Hazelwood, MPH
February 19, 2024

MONTHLY UPDATE: February 2024

Monthly Viral Respiratory Diseases Update week ending 2/17/2024.

This report brings up-to-date data on viral respiratory disease surveillance (VDS) in Wallingford, CT. VDS included in this report are COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

In Connecticut, the DPH uses multiple [surveillance systems](#) to monitor circulating viruses. Seasonal flu viruses can be detected throughout the year; however, seasonal flu activity generally begins as early as October and November and can continue through late May. Data in this report was collected from Local Health Department surveillance system provided by Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) and the CT Electronic Disease Surveillance System (CTEDSS).

A review of the data indicates that the month of February 2024 indicates a lower-case count for the monitored illness from the previous month (January 2024 report). However, seasonal influenza activity remains elevated nationally with increases in some parts of the country, particularly regions 3, 5, and 7. Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont are located within Region 1. <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/index.html>

It's important to note that we are still in the height of the respiratory disease season—which typically continues into the month of May. It's NOT too late to schedule your vaccine today!

Quiz-Test your knowledge on Influenza.

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. You can spread Flu even before symptoms appears | T or F |
| 2. A flu vaccine can NOT give you flu. | T or F |
| 3. Flu illness can be more severe for certain people | T or F |
| 4. Flu illness severity and flu season severity can vary. | T or F |
| 5. Antivirals can be used to treat flu illness. | T or F |
| 6. Some flu vaccines are preferentially recommended
for people 65 years and older. | T or F |

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/index.html>

Answers are located at the end of this report.



**Weekly Viral Respiratory
Disease Update**

CT Statewide VDS Cases week ending 2/17/24

**Connecticut Department
of Public Health**



Viral respiratory diseases included in this update are influenza, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Data for the current week are incomplete. All data are preliminary and routinely updated.

Throughout this report the abbreviation "K" is used to denote a number as thousands (e.g. 10K equals 10,000).

Viral Respiratory Disease

Influenza

Respiratory Syncytial Virus

COVID-19

Syndromic Surveillance

Nursing Homes

Vaccination

Current Week Ending:
2/17/2024

Previous Week Ending:
2/10/2024

Weekly Viral Respiratory Disease Case Summary

Viral Respiratory Disease Season: 10/1/2023-6/1/2024

For the Week Ending: 02/17/2024

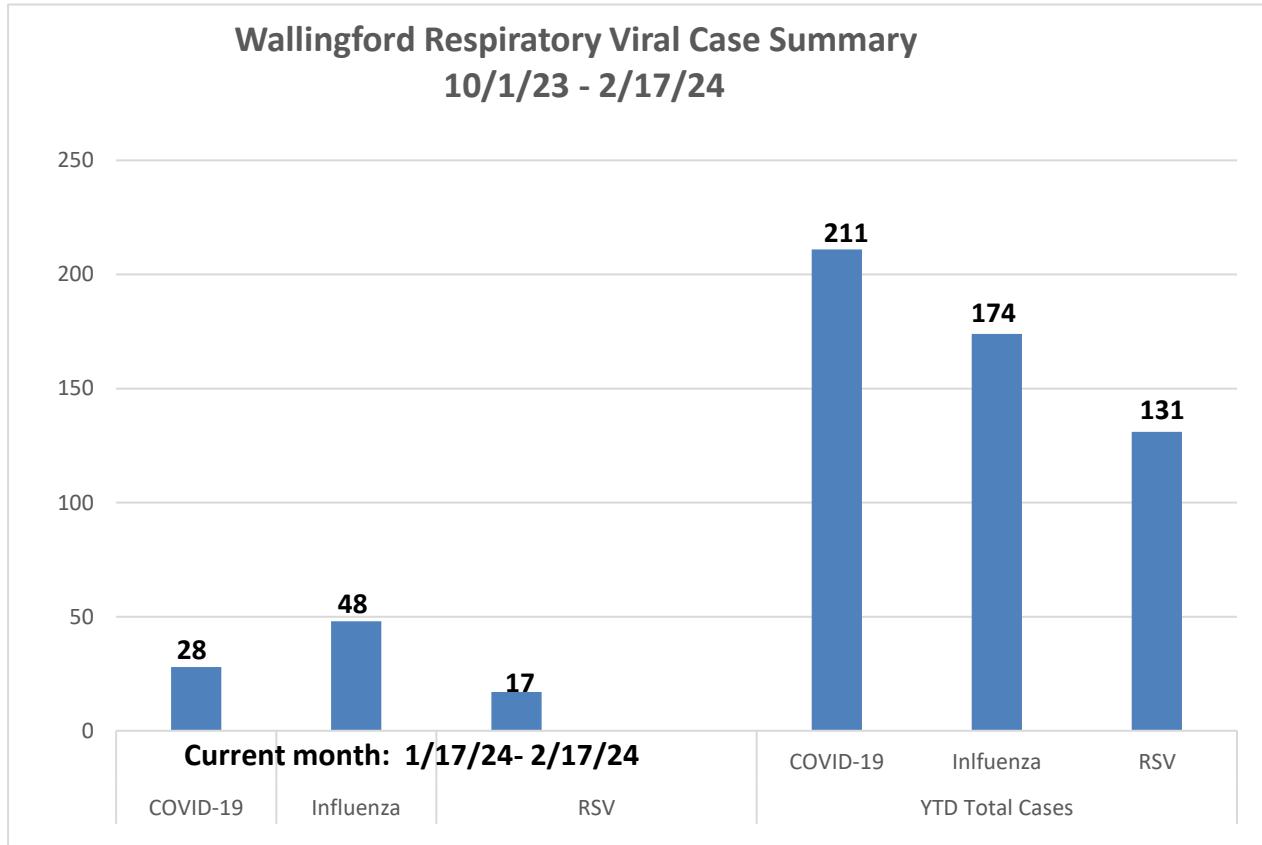
	Current Week	Previous Week	Season Total to Date
Influenza	508	1,318	17,717
COVID-19	320	1,588	44,160
RSV	77	223	12,909

<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/Connecticut-Reportable-Disease-Case-List/qhtt-czu2>

*note the decline in case summary from the previous report period

Town of Wallingford VDS week ending 2/17/24

(Surveillance Season: 10/1/23 - 6/1/24)



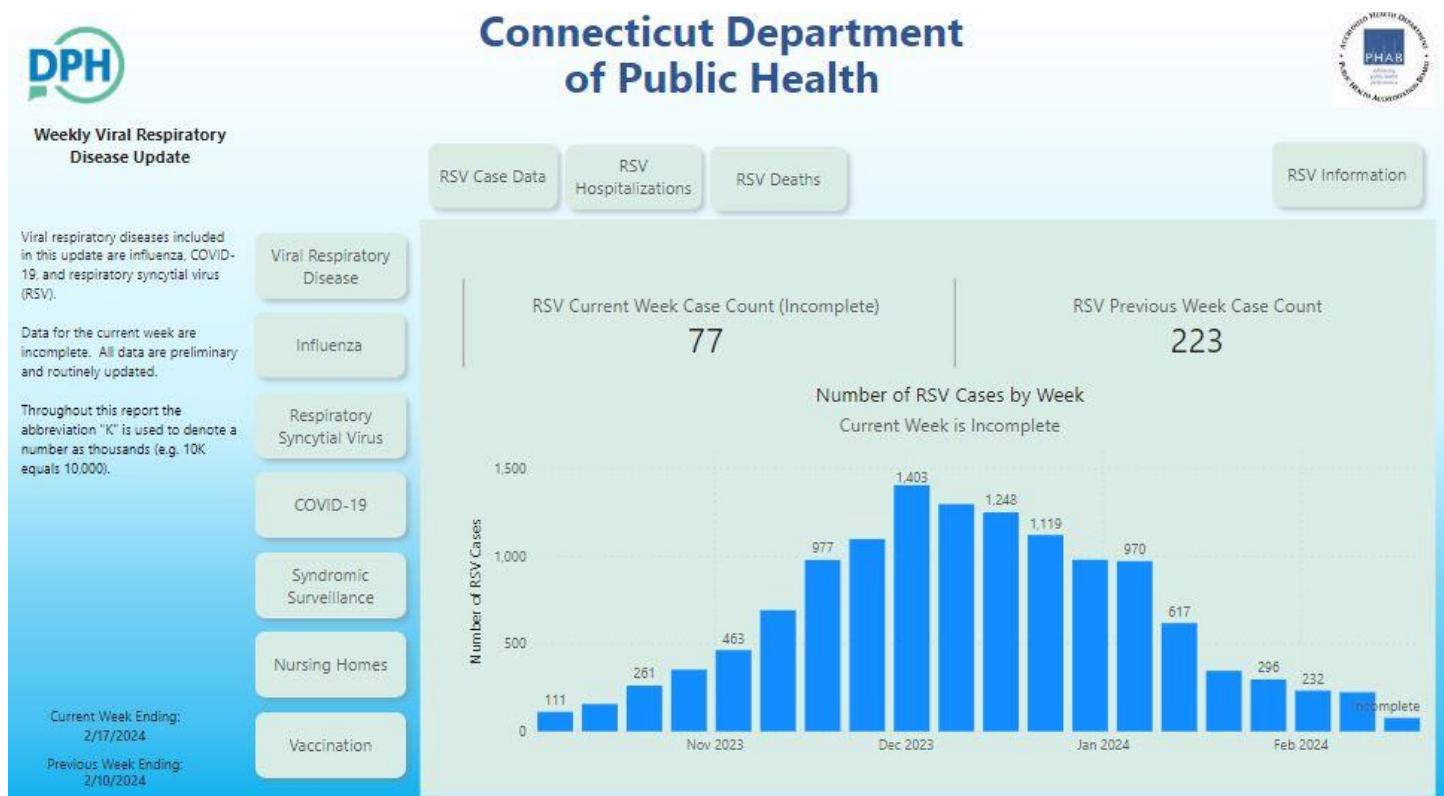
<https://edss.dph.ct.gov/maven/>

Respiratory Syndrome Virus (RSV)

RSV continues to be a respiratory virus of concern. Infants up to 12 months of age (especially those 6 months and younger) and children who were born prematurely, or who have chronic lung or heart disease or a weakened immune system, are at increased risk of severe RSV disease.

Adults at highest risk for severe RSV disease include older adults, adults with chronic medical conditions such as heart or lung disease, weakened immune systems, or certain other underlying medical conditions, or who live in nursing homes or long-term care facilities.

CT Statewide RSV Cases week ending 2/17/24

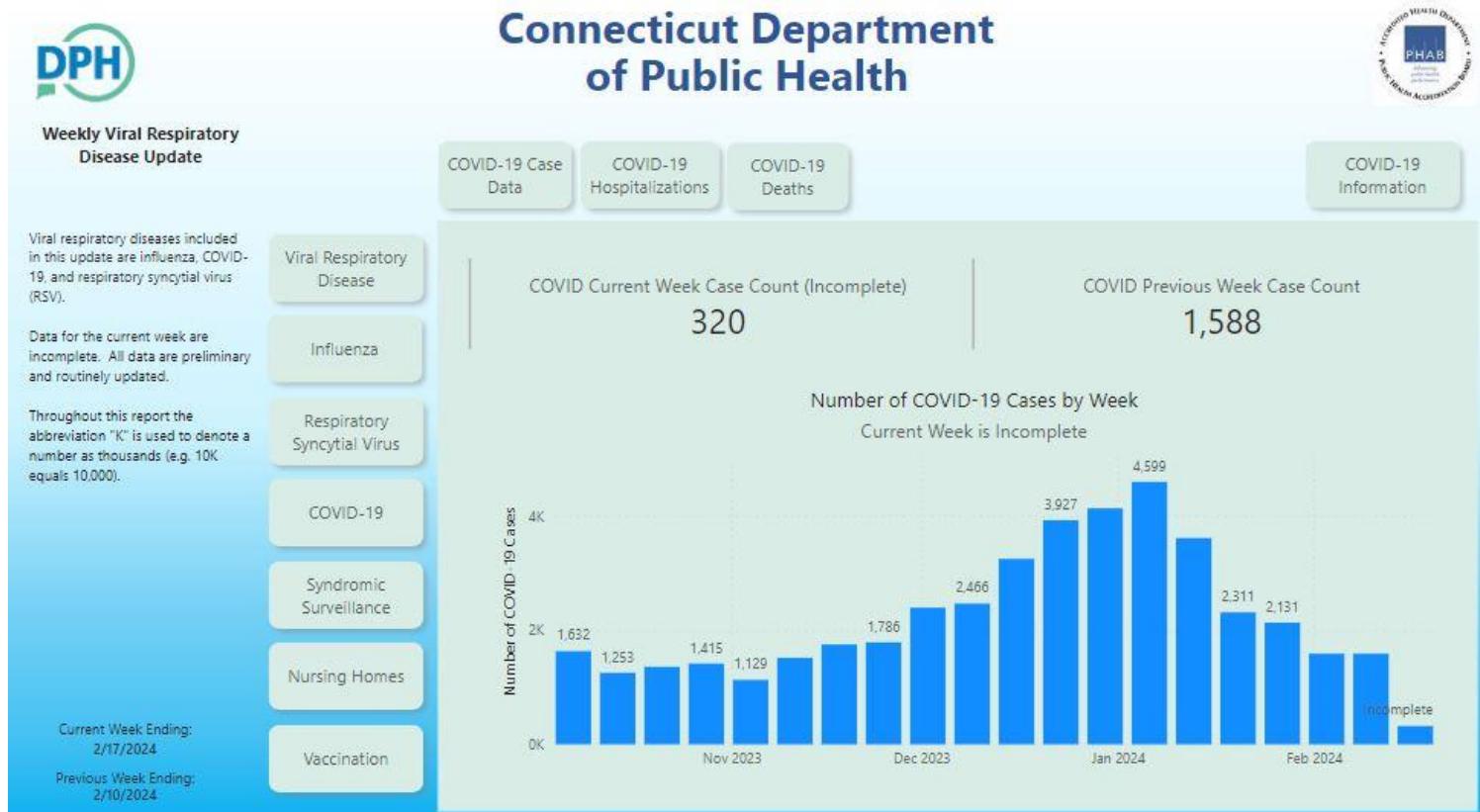


<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/Connecticut-Reportable-Disease-Case-List/qhtt-czu2>

COVID-19 INFORMATION

In alignment with the May 11, 2023, expiration of Connecticut's COVID-19 public health emergency declaration, the state transitioned its COVID-19 data reporting to the same period it uses under its seasonal respiratory surveillance reporting program, which begins each year in early October and ends in late May or early June. The 2023-2024 reporting period began October 2023.

CT Statewide COVID-19 Cases week ending 2/17/24



<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/Connecticut-Reportable-Disease-Case-List/qhtt-czu2>

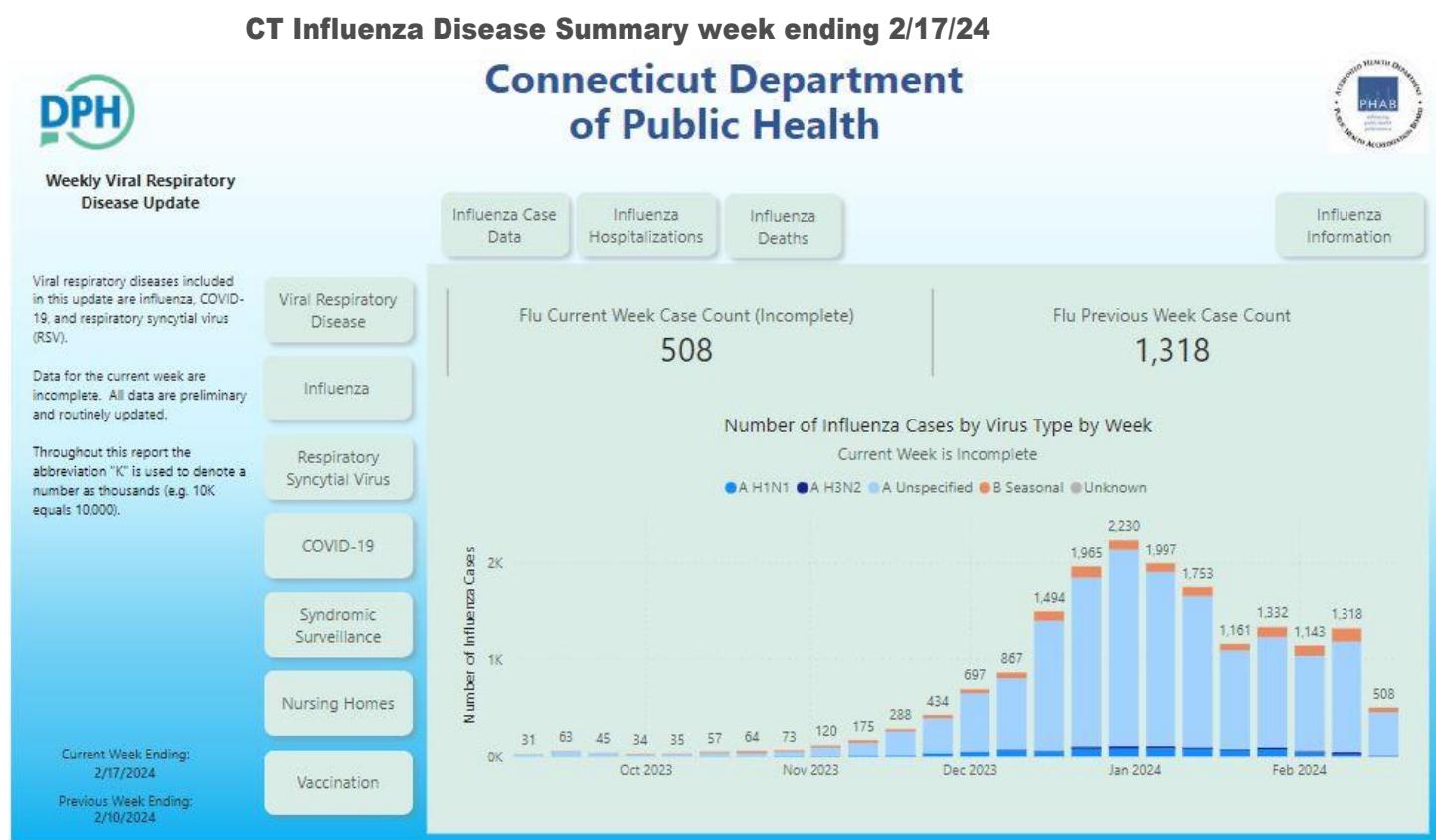
Influenza

The weekly surveillance reports show how this year's Viral Respiratory Disease season is developing. Each report is progressive and includes data starting from the beginning of this flu season. The CT DPH data shows that the last week in December had the highest number of influenza cases reported to date.

While seasonal influenza (flu) viruses are detected year-round in the United States, flu viruses typically circulate during the fall and winter during what's known as the flu season. Most of the time flu activity peaks between December and February, although significant activity can last as late as May.

The "peak month of flu activity" is the month with the highest percentage of [respiratory specimens](#) testing positive for influenza virus infection during that flu season. Flu activity most often peaked in February, followed by December, then January and March.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season>

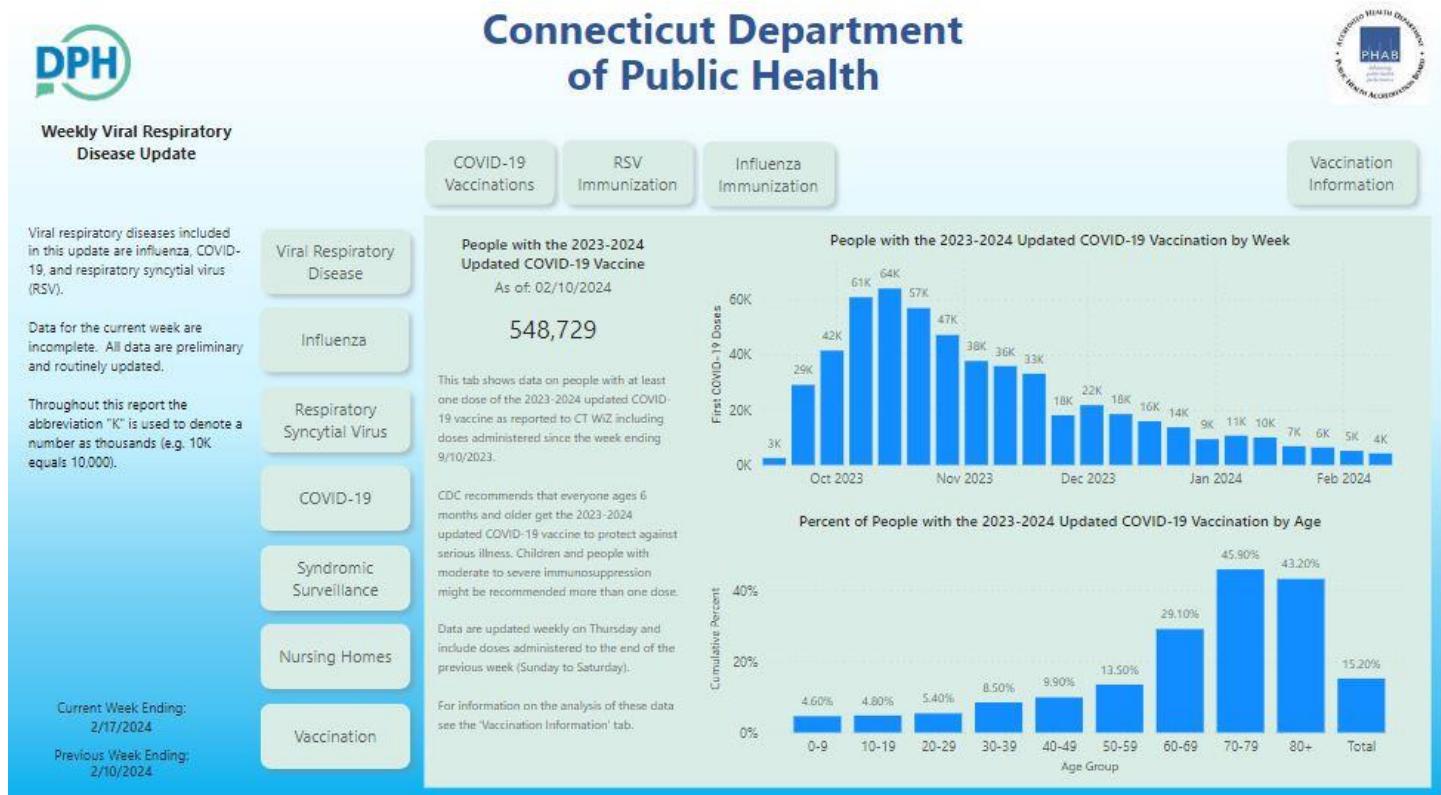


<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/Connecticut-Reportable-Disease-Case-List/qhtt-czu2>

Vaccination

Residents are encouraged to receive vaccination for preventable diseases, including COVID-19, RSV and Influenza. Vaccination will reduce the severity of illness and reduce your chances of becoming infected. Current vaccination data for both COVID-19 and RSV are provided by the CT DPH, statewide data:

Summary week ending 2/17/24



<https://data.ct.gov/Health-and-Human-Services/Connecticut-Reportable-Disease-Case-List/qhtt-czu2>

Answers: Test your knowledge on Influenza.

1. You can spread Flu even before symptoms appears. TRUE

You may be able to spread flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.
2. A flu vaccine can NOT give you flu. TRUE

Flu vaccines cannot cause flu illness. Most flu shots are made using killed viruses; one flu vaccine does not use flu viruses at all.
3. Flu illness can be more severe for certain people. TRUE

Certain groups of people are at a higher risk of developing serious flu complications. These groups of people include children younger than 5 years old, adults 65 years old or older, pregnant people, and people with certain chronic health conditions.
4. Flu illness severity and flu season severity can vary. TRUE

Flu illness can vary from no symptoms at all to very severe disease, depending in part on factors such as a person's age and underlying health status. Flu seasons can also vary widely in terms of their timing, severity, and impact on different age groups.
5. Antivirals can be used to treat flu illness. TRUE

Influenza antiviral drugs can be used to treat flu illness. These drugs can shorten the time you are sick, make your illness milder, and lessen serious flu complications that can result in hospitalization or death. Flu antivirals work best if taken within the first 48 hours after symptoms start. Early treatment with antiviral drugs is extremely important for people at higher risk of serious flu complications.
6. Some flu vaccines are preferentially recommended for people 65 years and older. TRUE

Some flu vaccines are preferentially recommended for people 65 years and older.
There are three flu vaccines that are preferentially recommended for people 65 years and older. These are [Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine](#), [Flublok Quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine](#) and [Fluad Quadrivalent adjuvanted flu vaccine](#). There is not a preferential recommendation for one of these three higher dose or adjuvanted flu vaccines over the others. On June 22, 2022, CDC's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\) voted unanimously](#) to preferentially recommend these vaccines over standard-dose unadjuvanted flu vaccines.

Additional Information

To find vaccine near you: <https://www.211ct.org/>

In the “search box” type “Flu Vaccine” and your zip code

Additional Vaccines: <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/>

COVID-19: To find vaccine near you: <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>

Or Call 1-800-232-0233

Free COVID-19 Home Tests: <https://www.covid.gov/tests>

For RSV vaccines: talk to your healthcare provider

The staff of the Wallingford Health Department is always available for additional questions or concerns: at 203-294- 2065

General information: Healthclerk@wallingfordct.gov

Public Health Nurse: anne.bernick@wallingfordct.gov