

# What To Expect This Fall



September 27, 2022



## What is going to happen with COVID-19 cases in the fall?

COVID-19 cases are estimated to increase this fall. This is due to lifting restrictions such as masking and physical distancing, waning immunity to COVID-19, and seasonal factors.

## What will happen with the flu and other respiratory illnesses this fall (RSV, Pneumococcal Disease, Influenza)?

Flu and other respiratory illnesses will be prevalent this fall and winter, and possibly more severe this year due to lower rates of immunity (both from natural infection and lower vaccination rates).

As an example, in 2020/2021, there were hardly any cases of influenza. This tells us that COVID-19 lockdown and other measures were highly effective at stopping nearly all transmission of the less infectious influenza virus.

In 2022, Australia had an early and relatively severe influenza season, with peak cases above levels seen in 2017-2019. This information can forecast what our fall and winter will be like.

Additionally, even in the late spring and early summer of 2022, we saw the return of diseases like influenza, respiratory syncytial virus, and other viruses in Alberta's 'off-season', so we expect much higher number of cases in the fall/winter.

## What can I do to stay safe and healthy?



Get vaccinated! Flu vaccines will be available in Alberta to the general population early fall. COVID-19 vaccines continue to be available.



Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your arm. Always wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.



Stay at home if you are feeling unwell! Avoid close contact with people who are also unwell.



Practice healthy habits: Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

### Did You Know?

*Viruses are more stable in cold weather? People are indoors more often during colder months which allows viruses to pass more easily from one person to another, causing an increase in illness.*

### Did You Know?

*Australia's winter occurs during June/July/August and is often used to predict what will happen during our winter months?*

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## How do I tell the difference between COVID-19 and the flu?

Common Symptoms	Cold	Flu	COVID-19
Fever and/or Chills		✓	✓
Headache		✓	✓
Muscle Pain/Body Ache		✓	✓
Feeling tired or weak		✓	✓
Sore Throat	✓	✓	✓
Runny nose	✓	✓	✓
Sneezing	✓		
Cough	✓	✓	✓
Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing		✓	✓
Vomiting and diarrhea		✓	✓
Change in or loss of taste of smell			✓