



News Release

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Connecticut Department of Public Health confirms season's first influenza and RSV deaths: officials stress the importance of staying up to date with seasonal vaccines

HARTFORD, Conn—The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) confirmed the first deaths of state residents due to influenza (flu) and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) for the 2023-24 respiratory viral disease season. The influenza death occurred in an adult resident, 80-89 years old, from Middlesex County, and the RSV death occurred in an adult resident, 80-89 years old, from New Haven County. No other information on these patients will be released.

During October, 67 COVID-19 associated deaths have also been reported in Connecticut residents. Historically in Connecticut, most deaths from COVID-19 have been among people aged 55 and older.

“This is a tragic reminder that the 2023-24 respiratory viral disease season is already an active one. As we approach the holidays, I strongly encourage all Connecticut residents to make sure they are up to date on their seasonal vaccines, particularly older individuals and those with multiple medical conditions,” said DPH Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD. “Even if you have had COVID before and have been previously vaccinated, our immunity dwindles over time. Getting vaccinated this fall will help you protect yourself and other members of your family as we enter the holiday season. In addition, preventing illnesses, even if they might have been mild infections, will help keep our children in school and adults at work. A healthier society at large will help all of us live our best lives.”

The current vaccine guidance to prevent respiratory viral diseases is:

- [Everyone 6 months of age or older](#) should receive an annual dose of influenza vaccine.
- [Everyone 6 months of age or older](#) should receive an updated COVID-19 vaccine.
- Adults 60 years of age and older and pregnant people are eligible to receive an [RSV vaccine](#) (Abrysvo). A monoclonal antibody, Nirsevimab (Beyfortus), is recommended for all infants younger than 8 months of age who are born during—or who are entering—RSV season.

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- The spread of respiratory viruses like the flu, COVID-19, and RSV can also be prevented through proper respiratory virus etiquette. These practices include handwashing, remaining home when sick, disinfecting surfaces, and masking if you have any respiratory symptoms.
- Residents can receive their vaccines from their health care provider, a retail pharmacy, or by visiting vaccines.gov to find a vaccination location near you. Additionally, DPH and the Connecticut Immunization Coalition are partnering with local health departments throughout the state on numerous vaccine clinics for children and adults. The entire schedule of local health clinics can be accessed at <https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/aWVXd/5/>.

More information about respiratory viral diseases is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Infectious-Diseases/RVD/Respiratory-Viral-Disease-Surveillance>.