

# Weekly Influenza News

## Week 50: December 12 to 18, 2021

### Week in Review:

Influenza Activity Indicator	Assessment of Indicator*	Interpretation
<u>Reported cases</u>	<b>Higher</b>	1 local lab-confirmed case reported in week 50; <b>0</b> cases reported in week 49
<u>Percent Positive of Flu Specimens<sup>†</sup></u>	<b>Similar</b>	Simcoe Muskoka: - flu A: 0.0%; flu B: 0.0% Ontario: - flu A: 0.0%; flu B: 0.0%
<u>Local Institutional Outbreaks</u>	<b>Similar</b>	<b>No</b> institutional flu outbreaks declared in week 50; <b>none</b> in week 49
<u>Local Emergency Department respiratory visits: week 50</u>	<b>Similar</b>	Percentage of visits is <i>similar</i> compared to previous week and <i>higher</i> compared to the same period in the 2020-21 season
<b>Week 50 Overall Assessment</b> December 12 to 18, 2021	<b>Higher</b>	<b>Reported Activity Level: Sporadic</b>
		1 case of Flu A in SMDHU this week 0 cases of Flu B in SMDHU this week
<u>Predominant Influenza Strains:</u> N/A		

**Notes:** Reported activity level is based on definitions available [here](#) (page 8).

\*Compared to previous [surveillance week](#) (Appendix B)

† Reported for week 49.

## Technical Notes

### Definitions

**Percentage positivity:** the number of positive flu cases divided by the number of specimens tested at Public Health Ontario Labs

**Reported activity level:** the level of influenza activity that is reported to Public Health Ontario by Simcoe Muskoka, based on influenza cases and outbreaks. Definitions available [here](#) (page 8)

**Surveillance week:** The week number corresponding to the week of year, running Sunday to Saturday, inclusive, for reporting influenza activity. January 1 always falls within week 1. A list of the current season's surveillance weeks can be found [here](#) (Appendix B)

### Limitations

#### Timeliness:

The provincial data are from one week previous because that is the most recent data available.

The hospital data, local counts of influenza, and outbreaks are current to date.

The number of cases listed in a given surveillance week may change as more information becomes available

#### Case-Follow-up and iPHIS Data Entry:

While Public Health Ontario only requires case information as provided by the laboratory report, the health unit investigates outbreak cases, as information is available, in order to provide a more accurate local picture of adverse outcomes and subtyping.

#### Case Reporting:

Sporadic cases do not accurately describe all cases of influenza as those cases reported are skewed towards individuals more likely to seek medical care and be tested (e.g. young, elderly and immunocompromised).

## Additional Resources

### Simcoe Muskoka

- [Influenza Fact Sheet](#)
- [Influenza HealthSTATS page](#)

### Provincial

- [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Respiratory Pathogen Surveillance Reports](#)
- [Viral Respiratory Mapper](#)

**Week 49 Provincial Summary\*:** For the 2021-2022 surveillance season to week 49, 38 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported across Ontario, 9 (24%) of which were reported in week 49. Among cumulative cases, 89% (34/38) have been influenza A.

(Source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, Surveillance Week 49, extracted January 18, 2022).

\*Note the number of cases in the Provincial Summary above may not match Percent Positive indicator in Table on page 1. This is because the Percent Positive is based on specimens tested at Public Health Ontario labs only, and the Provincial Summary above includes reported cases from all labs in Ontario including hospital and other private labs. The data source for the latter is the Integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) which is the reportable disease database for public health units.

### National

- [Public Health Agency of Canada FluWatch](#)

### International Resources

- [WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System](#)