Influenza Weekly Report
Week Ending November 13, 2022
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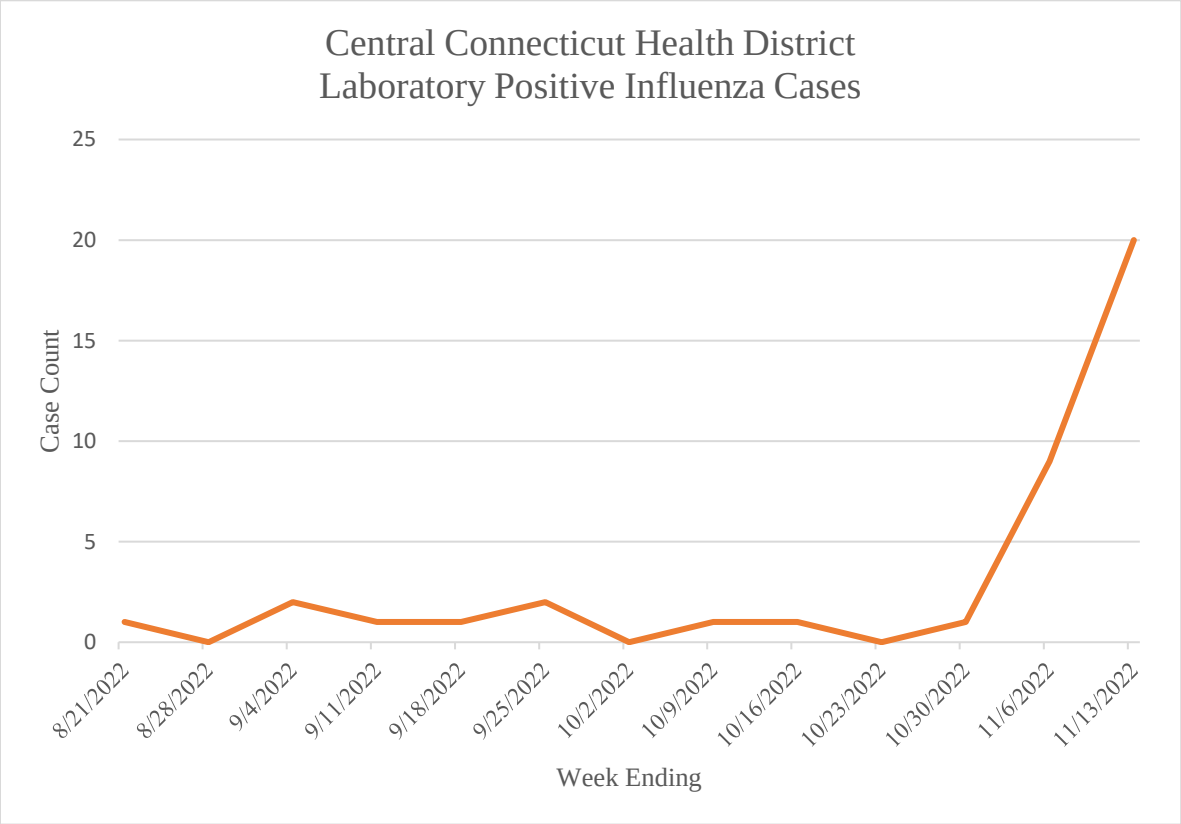
In the State of Connecticut, for influenza, only PCR (polymerase chain reaction) results are reportable to the health department. The data shown in the figures of this report do not reflect the true number of influenza cases within the Central Connecticut Health District. The actual number of influenza cases are higher than reported due to the absence of positive antigen test results. *The purpose of this report is to provide the community with situational awareness of influenza surveillance in our community.*

A total of 39 laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza have been reported to the Central Connecticut Health District since August 14, 2022. All 39 cases are influenza type A. Of the 39 reported cases, 27 (70%) have occurred between November 1st and November 13th. Figure 1 below illustrates the sharp uptick in the number of reported laboratory-confirmed influenza cases in the health district starting November 1st.

Figure 1

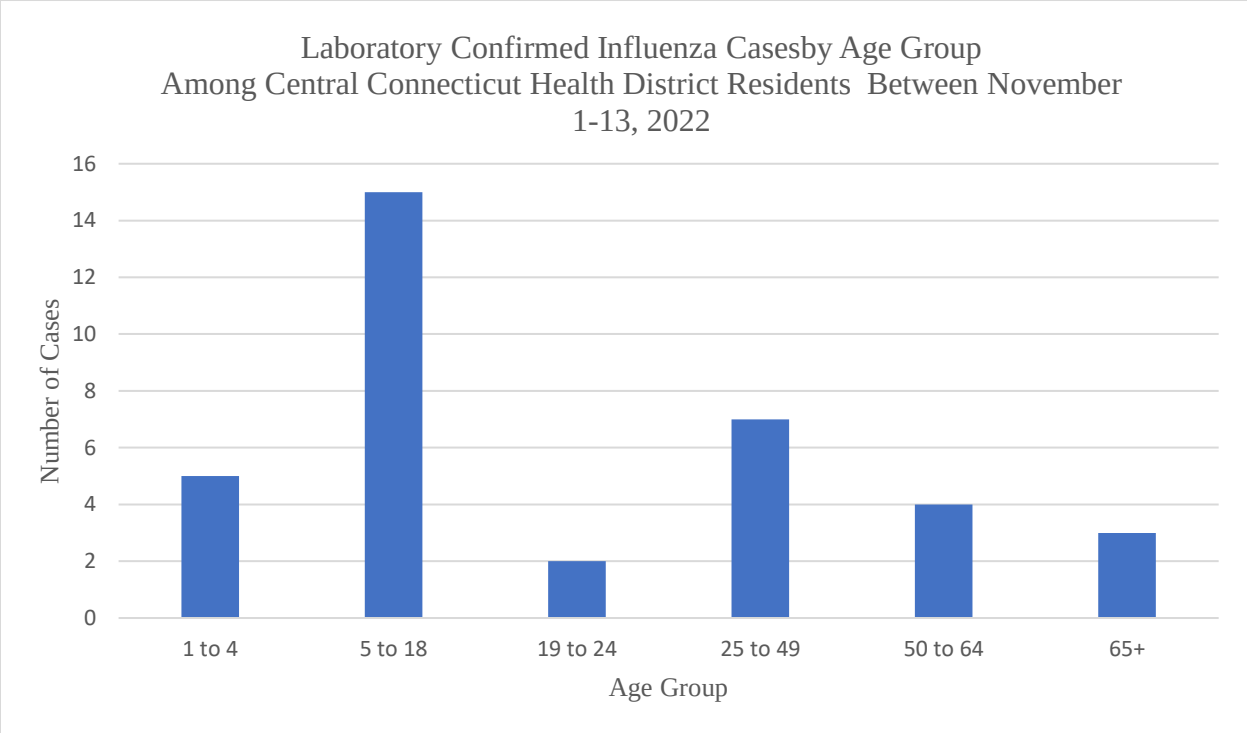


It appears that the spread of influenza this month is more profound in the school age group (5 to 18 years of age) than any other (See Figure 2).

To help protect students and staff from illness and absenteeism due to flu and other circulating respiratory viruses, schools are prudent to consider the following reminders from CDC:

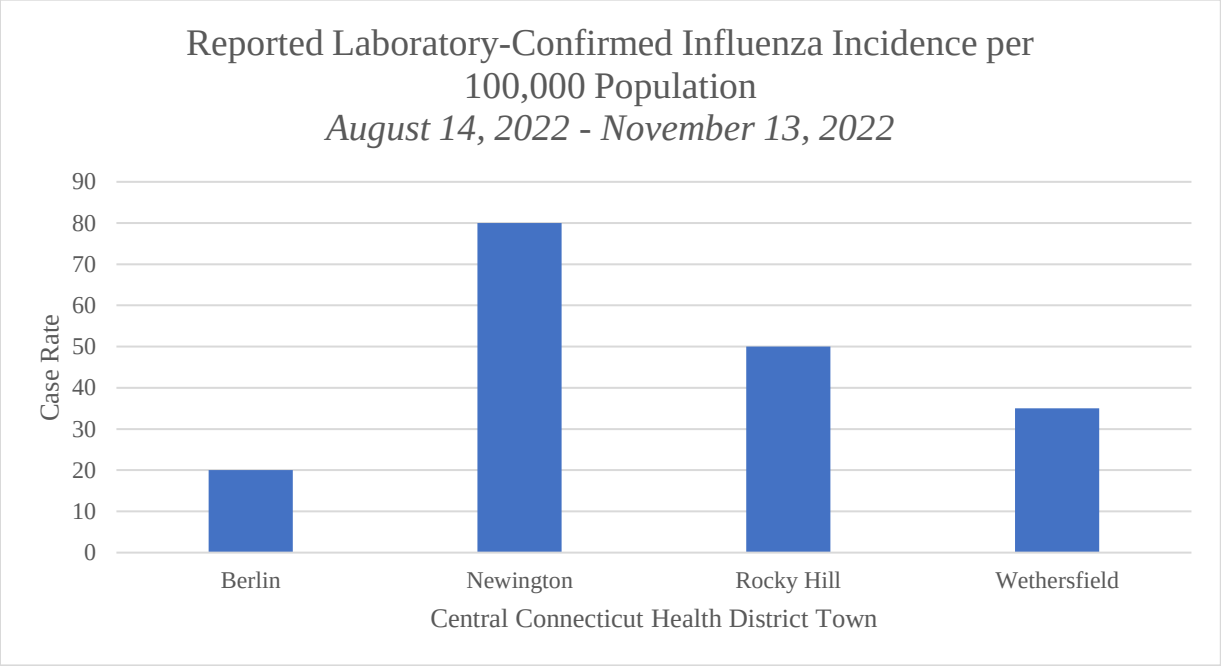
- **Stay home when you are sick/Keep your children home when they are sick**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth** and remind students of this
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces or objects at least daily.**

Figure 2



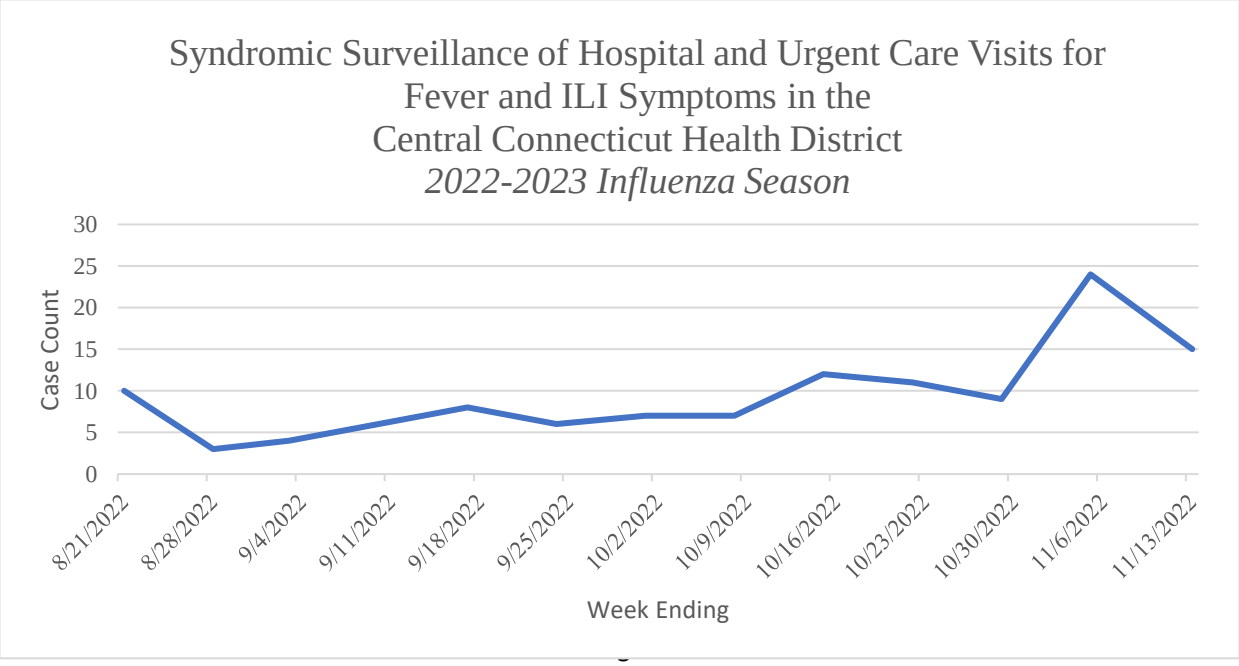
In the following figure (Figure 3), the incidence of influenza of cases per 100,000 population among towns within the Central Connecticut Health District is shown to illustrate how common influenza is in each of the towns: Berlin (population 20,436), Newington (population 30,014), Rocky Hill (population 20,115), and Wethersfield (population 26,008). Newington has the highest incidence of laboratory-positive PCR influenza tests in the district to date this flu season.

Figure 3

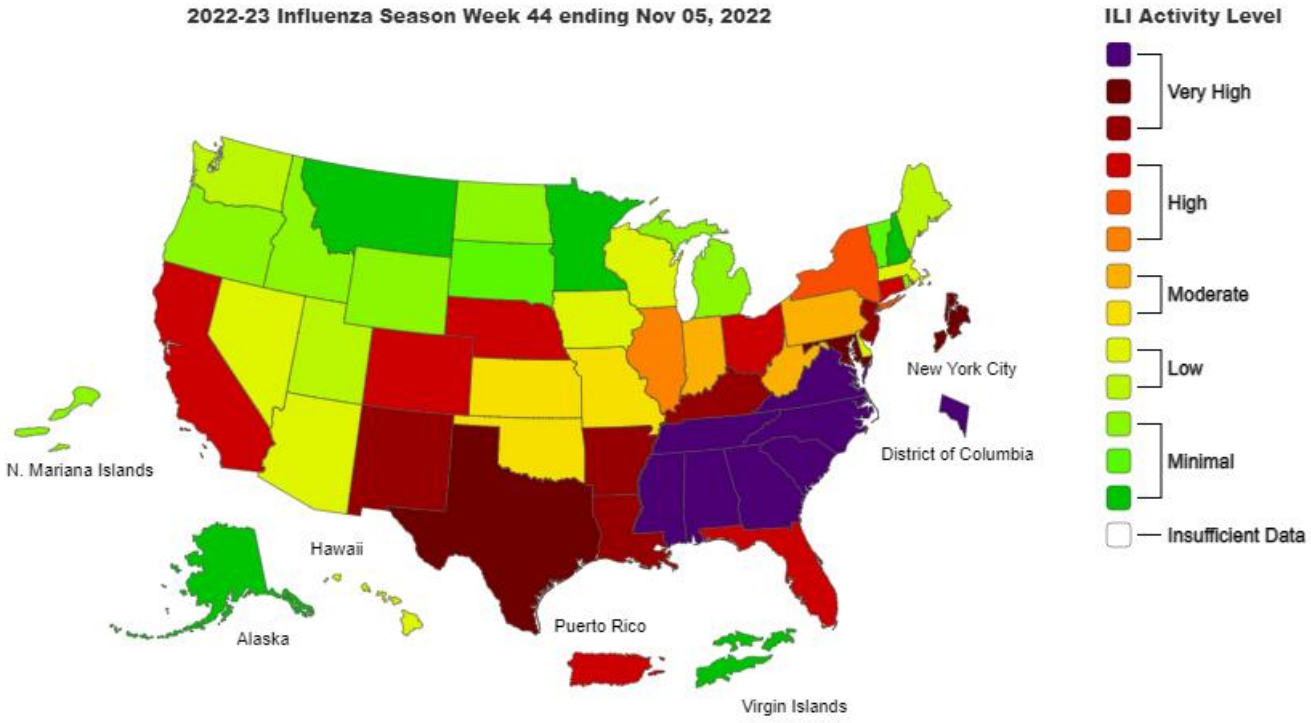


Hospitals and Urgent Care centers in Connecticut report patient data to Connecticut's Syndromic Surveillance System, Epicenter. This surveillance data on patient visits who experience symptoms for influenza-like illness and fever provides another way of monitoring influenza, since rapid antigen tests for influenza are not reportable. The cases of influenza within the district are higher than the reported PCR tests. We can see from Figure 4 that more residents have been seeking emergent health care due to influenza-like illness and fever (122), than the number of positive PCR tests of influenza that have been reported to the State (39) in Figure 1.

Figure 4



The map below is an influenza summary update from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This map was prepared by the Influenza Division at the CDC based on ILINet data. The ILINet data system monitors outpatient visits for respiratory illness that includes fever plus a cough or sore throat, also referred to as ILI (influenza-like illness). This system does not reflect only laboratory confirmed influenza and may capture patient visits due to other respiratory pathogens that cause similar symptoms. This map was updated on November 10, 2022.



As the holiday season approaches and we start to make our travel plans, it is important to note of areas with high to very high ILI activity. You can take precautions now by getting vaccinated and wearing a mask if you plan on attending large gatherings. Contact our health educator, Betty Murphy, at (860) 785-8380 x 210 or email her at bmurphy@ccthd.org if you are interested in obtaining N95 masks for your protection.

For more information on influenza please visit:

CDC 's Key Facts on Influenza
https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm#contagiousness