

# What To Expect This Winter



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

COVID-19 cases are estimated to increase this fall/winter due to a combination of waning immunity, new variants, and seasonal factors (e.g., more people gathering indoors, greater viral stability, etc.).

## What will happen with the flu and other respiratory illnesses this winter like influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)?

As with COVID-19, the incidence of other respiratory viruses such as influenza and RSV will increase this fall and winter. Last season (2022/23 fall/winter) we were hit with a tripledemic of COVID-19/influenza/RSV due to decreased immunity from decreased exposure from the pandemic years. We are hoping for a more mild respiratory season this year given last year's tripledemic. For example, Australia's 2023 influenza season was relatively 'normal' and not as severe as its 2022 season. That being said, the respiratory season is always unpredictable.


### Did You Know?


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


### 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.*

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

 Get vaccinated! Flu and COVID-19 vaccines are widely available across the country at many convenient locations.

 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.

# What To Expect This Winter



## 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			✓