



# COVID-19 & Flu Update

Durham Region Health Department  
Health & Social Services Committee  
April 6, 2023



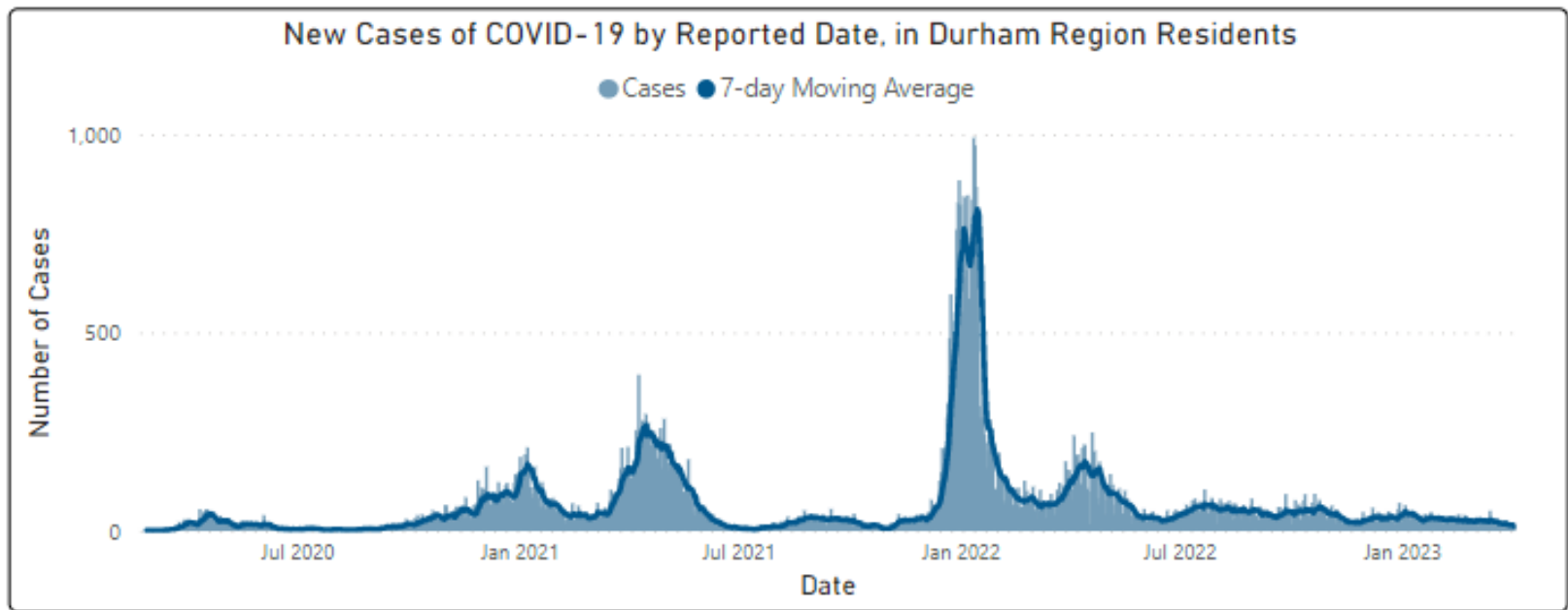
# Current Status – COVID-19

- World Health Organization (WHO) – [Statement on the update of WHO's working definitions and tracking system for SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern \(VOCs\) and variants of interest \(VOIs\) \(March 16, 2023\)](#)
  - SARS-CoV-2 continues to evolve
  - Omicron represents the most divergent VOC seen to date and Omicron viruses continue to evolve
  - Omicron viruses account for over 98 per cent of the publicly available sequences since February 2022
  - As of March 15, 2023, the WHO variant tracking system will consider Omicron sublineages independently as variants under monitoring (VUMs), VOIs or VOCs to provide the granularity needed to compare new descendent lineages
  - Working definitions of VOCs and VOIs have been updated and are available on the [WHO variant tracking website](#)
  - Changes have been made to better identify additional or new threats



# Current Status – COVID-19

[durham.ca/covidcases](https://durham.ca/covidcases) (Data Tracker)



- The Data Tracker is updated on Wednesdays

# Current Status – COVID-19 cont'd

## Cases Summary

Total Confirmed Cases to date  
in Durham Region Residents

74,036

Total Confirmed Cases Ever  
Hospitalized for COVID-19

2,181

Total Confirmed Cases Ever in  
ICU for COVID-19

419

Total Deceased

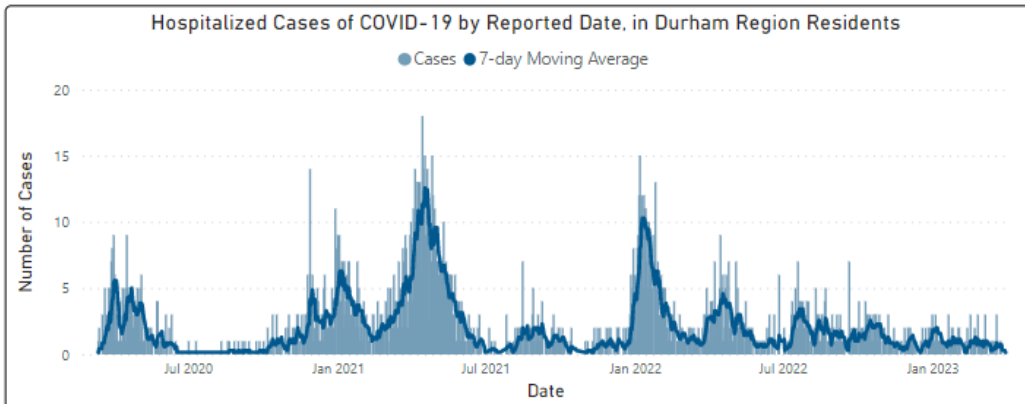
546

Total New Hospitalized  
Mar. 26 - Apr. 1, 2023

1

Total Deaths between:  
Mar. 26 - Apr. 1, 2023

0



Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Hospitals

Total Outbreaks Ongoing

3

- The Data Tracker reports the number of Durham Region residents who have been hospitalized (or that have had their hospital stay extended) because of COVID-19
- A confirmed outbreak in long-term care homes and retirement homes is two or more residents with a common epidemiological link each with a positive COVID-19 test result, within a 7 day period (visitors and staff are not included in the outbreak definition)

# COVID-19 Vaccination Administration

Total Doses Administered as of April 4, 2023

1,697,235

Total Doses Administered in Community and Hospital Clinics

1,120,823

Total Doses Administered in Pop-Up Clinics

59,347

Total Doses Administered in Mobile Clinics

41,708

Total Doses Administered in Pharmacies

391,130

Total Doses Administered in Primary Care

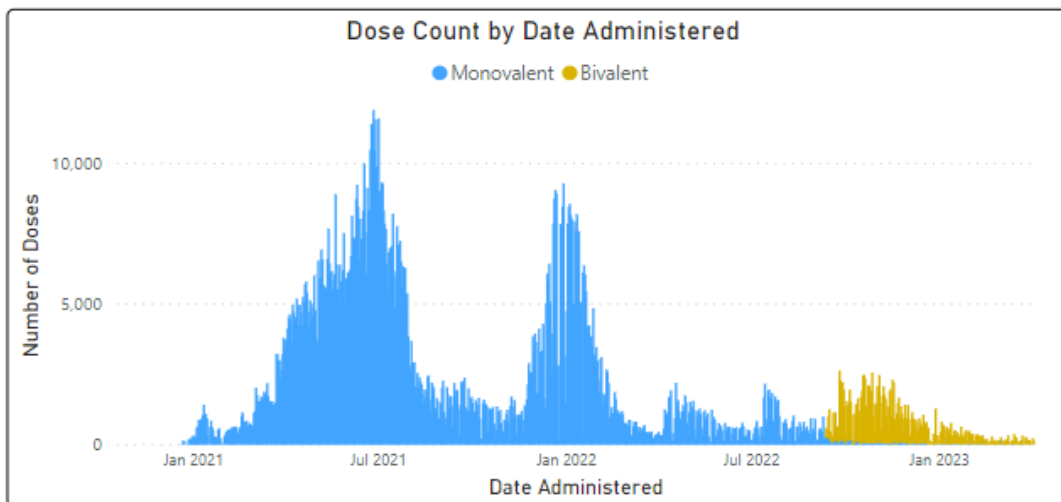
62,780

Total Doses Administered in Provincial Clinics

19,808

Total Doses Administered in Workplace Clinics

1,639



[durham.ca/vaccinetracker](https://durham.ca/vaccinetracker)





# COVID-19 Vaccination Coverage

**Use the municipality and age group filters to show vaccine coverage for different groups.**

- To select multiple groups, use Ctrl + click.
- Click on a selection again to clear it or click the eraser on the top right to clear all selections.
- Move your cursor away to see your selections.

## Municipality

Ajax	Oshawa	Uxbridge
Brock	Pickering	Whitby
Clarington	Scugog	

## Age Group

00-04	30-39	70-79
05-11	40-49	80+
12-17	50-59	
18-29	60-69	

Percentage Initiating Primary Series

83.3%

Percentage Completing Primary Series

79.6%

Percentage Completing Primary Series & Any Booster

46.9%

Percentage Completing Primary Series & Bivalent Booster

18.1%

Percentage Receiving Any Vaccine Dose Within Past 6 Months

16.7%



# Wastewater Surveillance

- As of April 1, 2023, the number of sampling sites have been reduced from seven to two sites
- The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) is responsible for managing and funding Ontario's Wastewater Surveillance Initiative
- Following a comprehensive review and consultations with public health units (PHUs), MECP launched a new network of sampling sites
- Changes were made to represent each PHU area and focus resources on sites that provide results with the least amount of duplication
- An additional site has been identified for emergency sampling, if needed

## COVID-19 Wastewater Trends in Durham Region

Sampling Site	Municipality	Signal Strength	Trend
Corbett	Whitby	Medium	Increasing
Darlington	Clarington	Medium	Stable

Sampling sites are colour-coded based on the strength and trend in COVID-19 viral signal in wastewater over the past 14 days. Signal strength and trend calculations are based on data from at least three samples. "No Recent Data" refers to when there were fewer than three samples collected over the past 14 days. "Not Detected" refers to when all samples collected during this time were below the limit of detection.

Viral signal strength is categorized as High, Medium or Low based on seasonal historical data of COVID-19 concentrations in wastewater. The trend is based on a linear regression and assesses if COVID-19 concentrations are significantly increasing, decreasing or are stable.

Number of Samples Collected in Past 14 Days

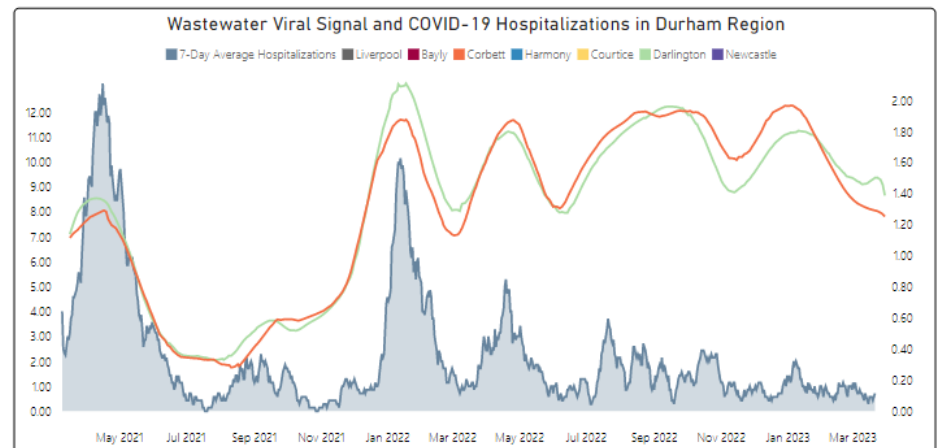
5

Number of Samples with Positive Detections in Past 14 Days

5

The number of samples reflect the total number collected across all 7 sites over the past 14 days. The number with positive detections reflect the total number of samples where COVID-19 virus was detected.

For this graph, the 7-day moving average of new hospitalizations for COVID-19 in Durham Region residents is plotted on the y-axis on the left. Statistically smoothed wastewater COVID-19 viral signal (gene copies/mL on log<sub>10</sub> scale) for each sampling site is plotted on the y-axis on the right.





# Guidance for Cases & Contacts

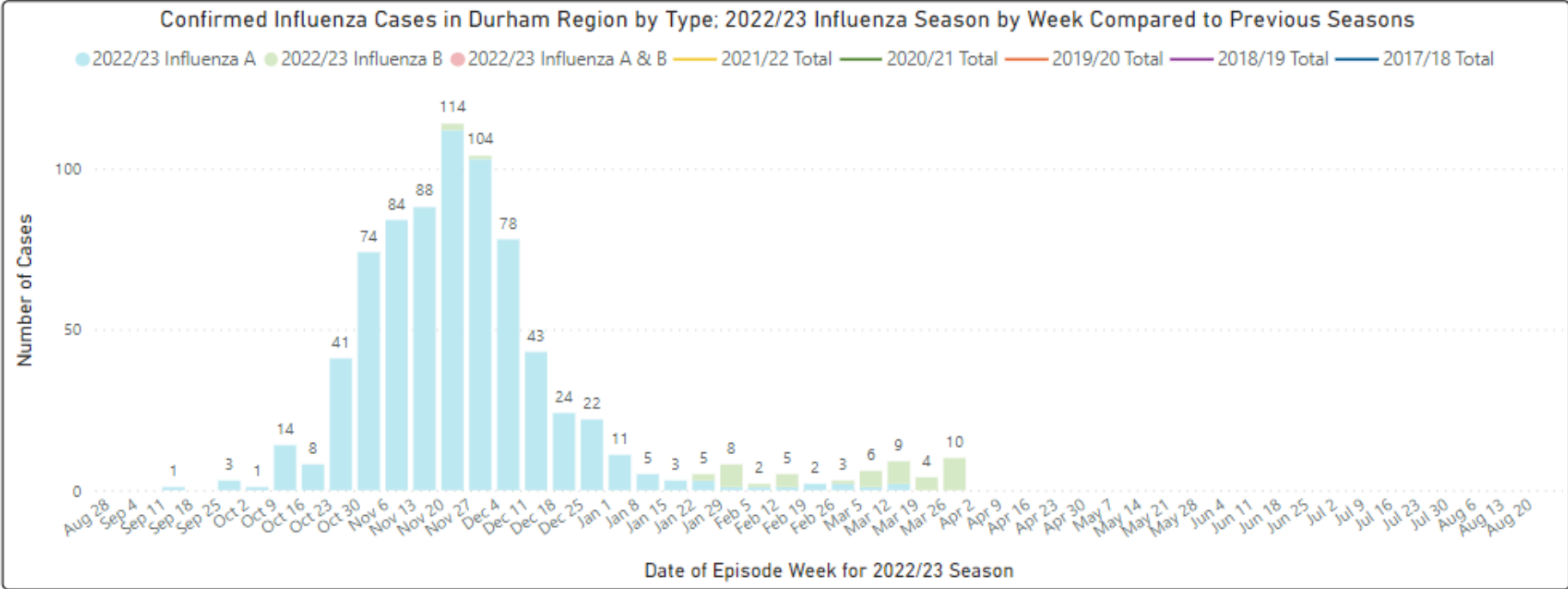
- Stay home when sick
- Individuals that have COVID-19 symptoms or are positive for COVID-19 advised to:
  - Stay home until symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for gastrointestinal symptoms) and no fever is present
  - For 10 days after symptom onset or specimen collection, wear a mask in public settings, avoid visiting anyone at higher risk of illness and avoid non-essential visits to high-risk settings such as hospitals and long-term care homes
- Asymptomatic positive cases do not need to self-isolate
  - Advised to wear a mask in public settings for 10 days after specimen collection
- Household and non-household close contacts should
  - Self-monitor for symptoms and self-isolate immediately if symptoms develop
  - Wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings for 10 days after the last exposure to the positive case
- Visit [durham.ca/covidinfohub](https://durham.ca/covidinfohub) for more information





# Current Status – Flu

[durham.ca/flucases](https://durham.ca/flucases) (Flu Tracker)



- The Flu Tracker is updated on Wednesdays





# Current Status – Flu cont’d

**Overall Assessment of Influenza Activity** for Week of Mar 26 to Apr 01, 2023

Moderate

The overall influenza assessment categories are:

**Low:** 5 or fewer laboratory confirmed cases and no influenza outbreaks

**Moderate:** 6-12 laboratory confirmed cases or 1 influenza outbreak

**High:** More than 12 laboratory confirmed cases or 2 or more influenza outbreaks.

## Current Status of Cases (2022/2023)

Total Confirmed Cases of Influenza in Durham Region Residents

772

Influenza A

728

Influenza B

44

Influenza A & B

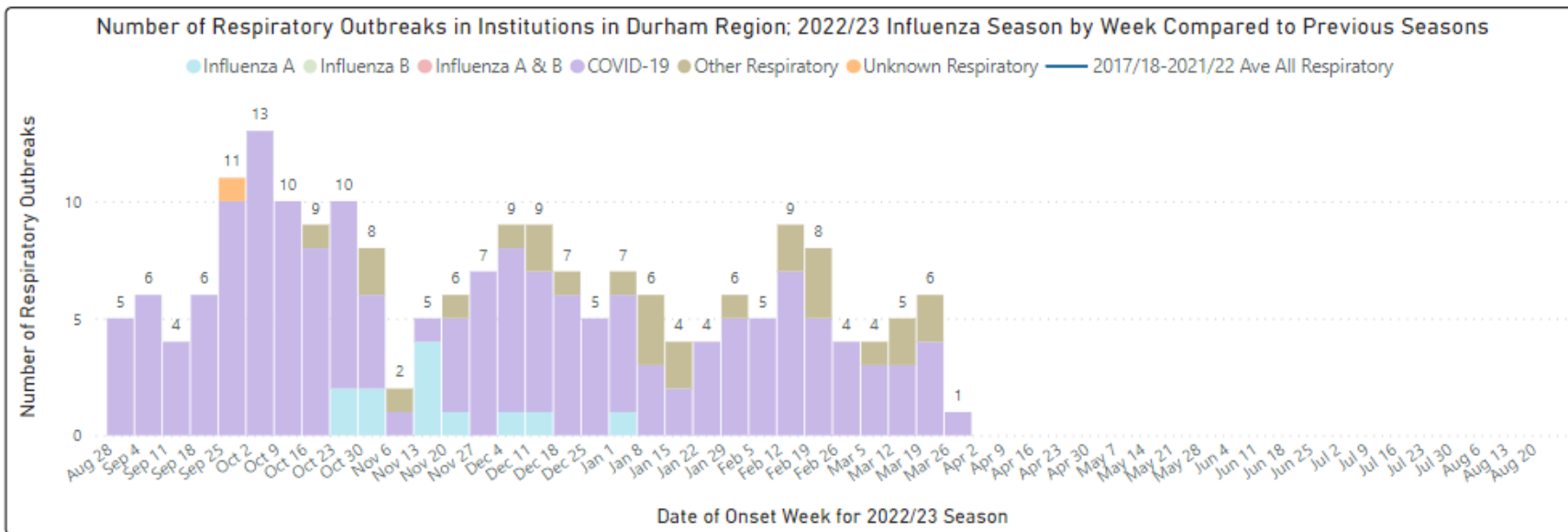
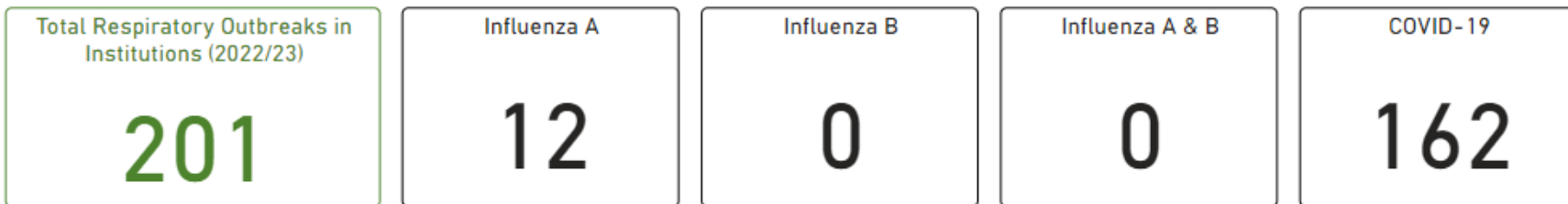
0

Number of Confirmed Cases by Episode Date

	Mar 26	Mar 27	Mar 28	Mar 29	Mar 30	Mar 31	Apr 1
Influenza A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Influenza A & B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Influenza B	1	1	4	4	0	0	0
Total Cases	1	1	4	4	0	0	0

# Current Status – Respiratory Outbreaks

## Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Hospitals



# Child Care & School Absenteeism

**Overall Absenteeism** for Week of Mar 26 to Apr 01, 2023

Child Care Centre Absenteeism

**6.7%**

Elementary School Absenteeism

**4.8%**

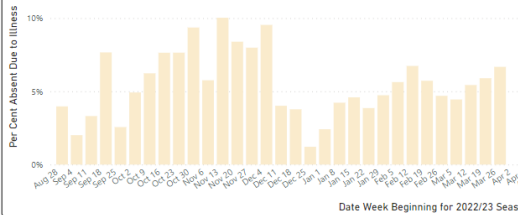
Secondary School Absenteeism

**3.6%**

## Child Care Centres

Child Absenteeism Due to Illness in Durham Region Child Care Centres; 2022/23 Influenza Season by Week Compared to Previous Seasons

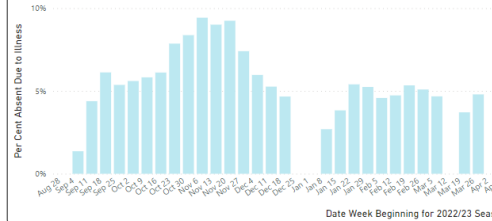
2022/23 Average 2017/18 to 2021/22 Durham Region (2022/23)



## Elementary Schools

Absenteeism Due to Illness in Durham Region Elementary Schools; 2022/23 Influenza Season by Week Compared to Previous Seasons

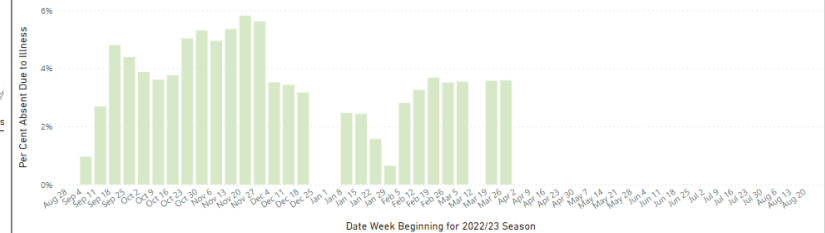
2022/23 Average 2017/18 to 2021/22 Durham Region (2022/23)



## Secondary Schools

Absenteeism Due to Illness in Durham Region Secondary Schools; 2022/23 Influenza Season by Week

2022/23 2021/22 Durham Region (2022/23)







# Current Masking Requirements

- All Ontarians are advised to wear a tight-fitting, well constructed mask in crowded indoor public spaces, especially those at higher risk of severe infection
- Individuals with symptoms, positive cases, and close contacts of positive cases are advised to wear a mask in public settings for 10 days after symptom onset, positive test result or exposure to positive case
- Masks are required in long-term care and retirement homes in common areas; masks may be removed in an individual's room during a visit, provided no other person (e.g., staff, PSW, etc.) is present
- Organizations may implement their own masking policies
- Updated information available at [durham.ca/masks](https://durham.ca/masks)



# Current COVID-19 & Flu Vaccine Plans

- All residents six months and older are eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19
  - Community immunization clinic (CIC) calendar available at [durham.ca/covidvaccines](https://durham.ca/covidvaccines)
  - Residents can book an appointment at [durham.ca/vaccineappointment](https://durham.ca/vaccineappointment)
- All residents five years of age and older can book an appointment for the COVID-19 bivalent booster
- The Provincial Spring 2023 COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign will be launched on April 6, 2023
  - An additional booster dose is recommended for individuals at high risk for severe outcomes at a 6-month interval
    - Until release of the Provincial guidance, public health units and health care providers can refer to the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization's \(NACI's\) guidance on an additional COVID-19 booster dose in the spring of 2023](#)



# Current COVID-19 & Flu Vaccine Plans

- Clinics are available at the Pickering CIC and Whitby Clinic throughout April and are being planned for the coming months
- Pop-up clinics for COVID-19 vaccines can be requested by eligible agencies and settings by completing an [online request form](#)
- COVID-19 vaccinations continue to be available through local health care providers and pharmacies
- Although flu season is winding down, flu shots remain available through participating health care providers, walk-in clinics and pharmacies
- DRHD offers flu shots for individuals six months to two years old who are unable to access a health care provider
  - Parents/guardians can contact Durham Health Connection Line at 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 for more information