

Recent COVID and Influenza activity in Texas

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Between March 6, 2020, and September 2, 2023, 8,757,123 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 were reported in Texas.¹ To date in 2023, 483,490 confirmed and probable cases have been reported. Confirmed cases have a molecular test that detects the viruses' genetic material. Probable cases have a positive test for viral antigen. During the time period August 27, 2023, through September 2, 2023, there were 3001 new COVID-19 cases, both probable and confirmed. On the day of the report, September 5, 2023, there were 1427 patients hospitalized with COVID 19. The seven-day rolling average for hospital cases was 1422. The number of new COVID-19-associated fatalities was 42 during the August 27 to September 2 week. The total number of COVID-19 associated deaths in 2023 was 2,185 (Table). The death rates were highest in patients 75 to 79 years of age (29.6 per 100,000) and 80+ years of age (112.6 per 100,000). The mortality rate per 100,000 population was relatively uniform throughout the state. The mortality rate was higher in patients with a white race classification (11.4 per 100,1000) and in men (7.9 per

1000,000). There is limited information on genetic sequence analysis of COVID-19 variants identified in Texas. Only 11 virus samples have been classified; four of these were XBB.1.5 and two were XXB.1.9.2.

The Texas Department of State Health Services reported the number of influenza cases in Texas based on the reporting period of October 2, 2022, through September 2, 2023.² There were 39,467 positive lab specimens; 94.9% of these were influenza A and 5.1% were influenza B. Subtyping indicated that there were similar percentages of influenza A H1N1 and influenza A H3N2. During the current reporting week for this particular report, which ended September 2, 2023, there were 548 rhino/enterovirus positive tests and 43 RSV positive tests. There were 9,706 deaths classified as pneumonia and influenza between October 2, 2022, and September 2, 2023. In the age group 50 to 64 years and in the age group 65+, 1711 and 7205 deaths occurred. The mortality rate for the age group 65+ was 163.4 per 100,000.

Table. COVID-19 and Influenza Activity in Texas

Outcomes	COVID-19	Influenza
Number of cases	483,490 confirmed and probable cases*	39,467 positive lab tests**
Deaths	2,185***	9,706****
Mortality rate	7.0 per 100,000	31.1 per 100,000
Mortality rate based on age	29.6 per 100,000 Age 75–79	163.4 per 100,000 Age 65+

*confirmed cases-positive PCR, probable cases-positive antigen test;

**positive lab tests

***COVID-associated mortality;

****pneumonia and influenza deaths.

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These results indicate that COVID-19 infections have occurred more frequently in Texas residents than influenza infections. However, the mortality rate is higher with influenza per 100,000 residents, especially in residents older than 65. This rate is attributed to both pneumonia and influenza infections, and the exact contribution of influenza is difficult to determine.

Keywords: COVID-19, influenza, Texas, incidence, mortality

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