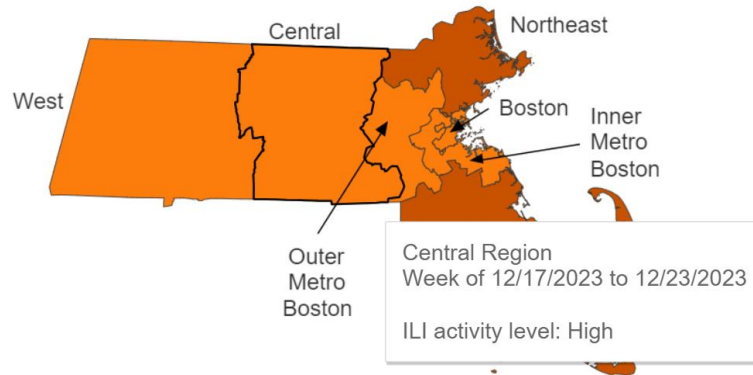


I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday! This newsletter provides an update on the respiratory illness activity in the state and in our region.

Respiratory illness activity is rapidly increasing across the United States. The current estimated severity of influenza is high for the week of 12/17-12/23 across the state and in Central Massachusetts. Weekly severity is determined by combing three key markers of influenza activity and distribution influenza-like illness, hospitalizations, and influenza positive test results reported to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.



However, the vaccination rates for COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) remain low across the country and state. During the 2022-2023 season, 45.3% of Massachusetts residents were vaccinated against influenza, compared to this season's rate (36.8%).

Currently, 1 out of every 6 (18.1%). Massachusetts residents have been vaccinated with the updated COVID-19 vaccine and 1 out of every 3 (36.8%) received the influenza vaccine, this season. However, Boylston, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough have higher vaccination rates, than the state, as seen in the chart below.

Town	% Vaccinated against Influenza	% Vaccinated against COVID-19
Boylston	42.6%	22.2%
Northborough	45.0%	24.9%
Southborough	48.9%	28.7%
Westborough	44.6%	24.4%
State	36.8%	18.1%

Please let me know if you have any questions! I hope everyone has a happy and healthy New Year!

