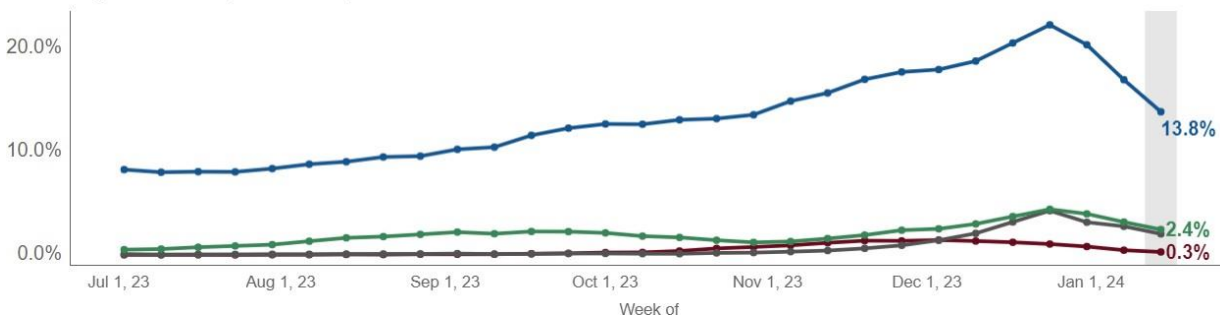


Health Update: January 26th

I hope everyone is staying healthy! Amidst the respiratory illness season, I have provided state-wide data indicating a decline in respiratory disease trends.

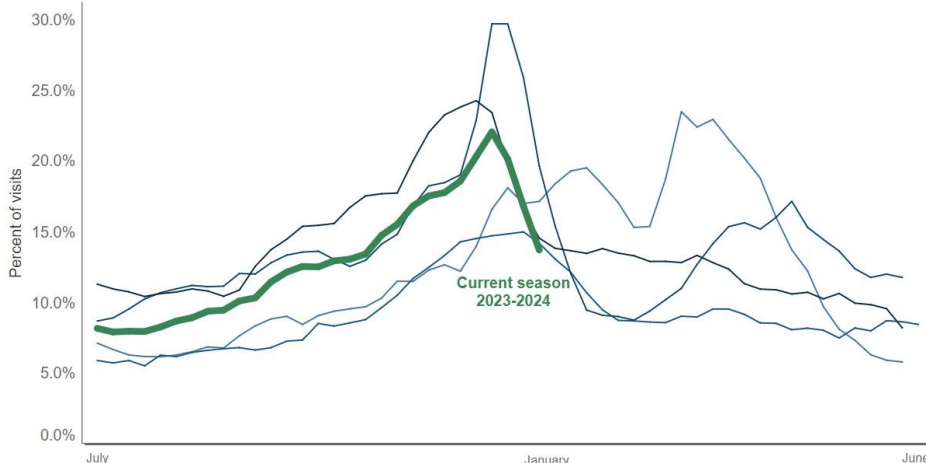
During the previous week (1/14/24-1/20/24), 13.8% of all emergency department visits in Massachusetts were due to acute respiratory diseases. In the graph presented below, the percentage shows acute respiratory disease, which includes COVID-19, influenza, and RSV, are trending downward. Acute respiratory diseases appeared to have peaked in Massachusetts during the week of 12/25/23 – 12/31/23.

Percent of emergency department visits related to **acute respiratory diseases**, including **COVID-19**, **influenza**, and **RSV**



This decline in late December, early January, is similar to the past few respiratory seasons, as displayed in the graph below. All data is from the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences, Syndromic Surveillance program. To view all of the state data, click [here](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/respiratory-illness-reporting) or visit www.mass.gov/info-details/respiratory-illness-reporting.

Comparing the **current season** to **previous seasons**: ED visits for acute respiratory disease



Free COVID-19 tests are still available through USPS. Everyone in the U.S. is eligible to order an additional 4 free at-home tests. If you did not order tests this fall, you may place two orders for a total of 8 tests. Click [here](https://www.covid.gov) or visit www.covid.gov to order your home tests.

Before throwing out "expired" tests kits, check the [FDA's website](https://www.fda.gov) to see if your COVID-19 tests' expiration dates have been extended.

Currently, COVID-19 isolation remains 5 days, when you are most infectious, and then the state recommends wearing a mask around others for an additional 5 days. Masks can be removed prior to day 10, if you have had 2 negative tests taken 48 hours apart. For a refresher on current COVID isolation guidance, visit www.mass.gov/isol8.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Stay Healthy!

FREE COVID-19 TESTS

- * Receive up to 8 free test kits per household
- * Free shipping
- * Delivered directly to your home

Visit COVIDTests.gov or call 1-800-232-0233