



Yuletide and the Pandemic

December 2022

INTRODUCTION

- It's that time of the year when we gather to celebrate the end of the year and the beginning of a new one all over the world
- It's a time when families and friends come together in small/private or large/public gatherings to reunite
- It is indeed the most wonderful time of the year



INTRODUCTION (CONT.)

- As we celebrate and reunite, it is important that we become cognizant of where we were, where we are, and where we are heading as we navigate through the dynamic phase of the pandemic and flu season
- It's understandable how stressed residents were during the period of lockdowns, isolations, and outbreaks
- At the moment, we have some relief. However, we acknowledge that the new norm is still far away from the feeling of normal

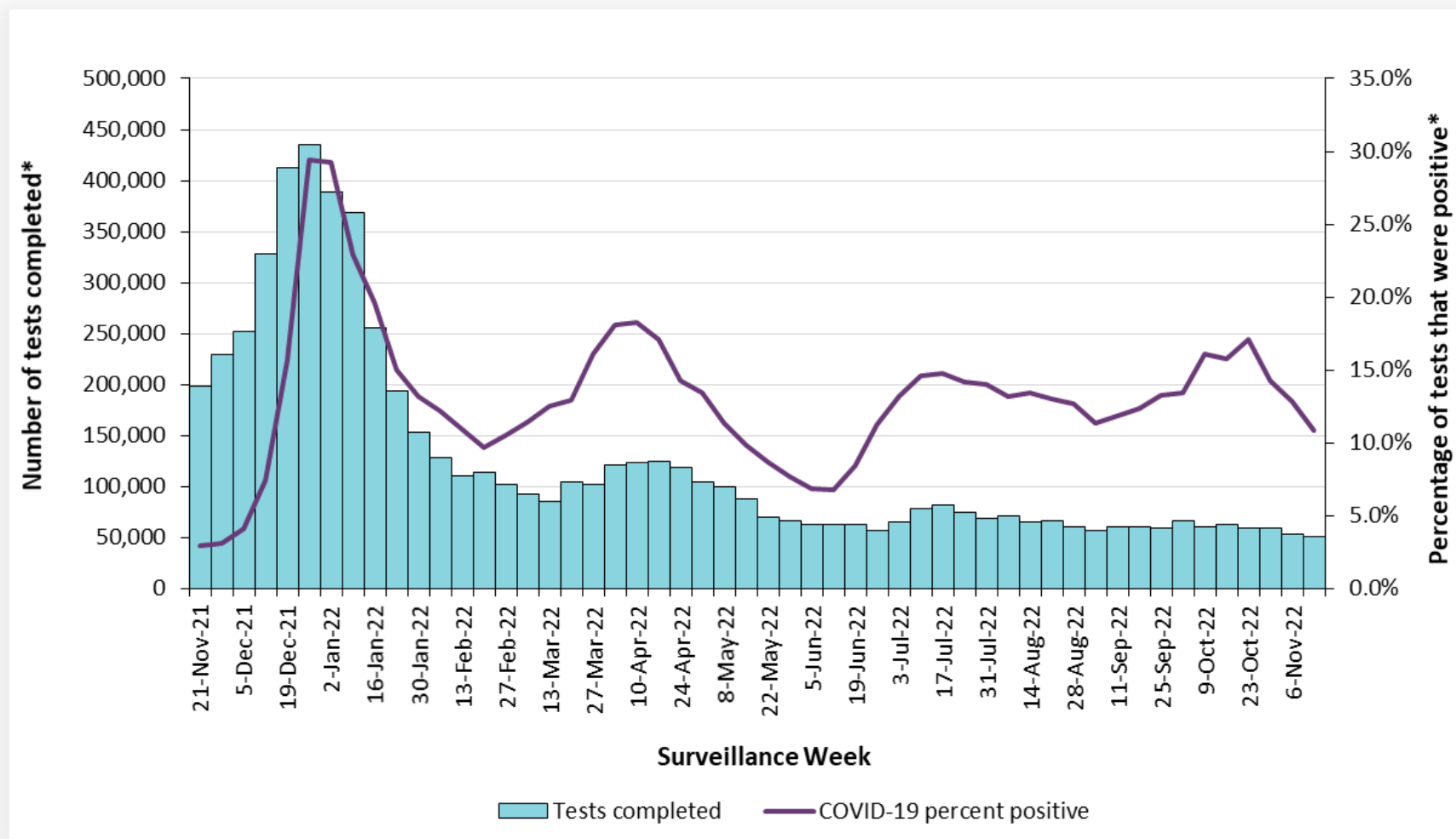


COMBO OF RESPIRATORY VIRUSES

- COVID
- INFLUENZA
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
- According to the weekly epidemiological data, these viruses are still causing outbreak.
- Although there is a reduction in test positivity rate for COVID lately, other respiratory viruses have increased dramatically as seen in the following figures

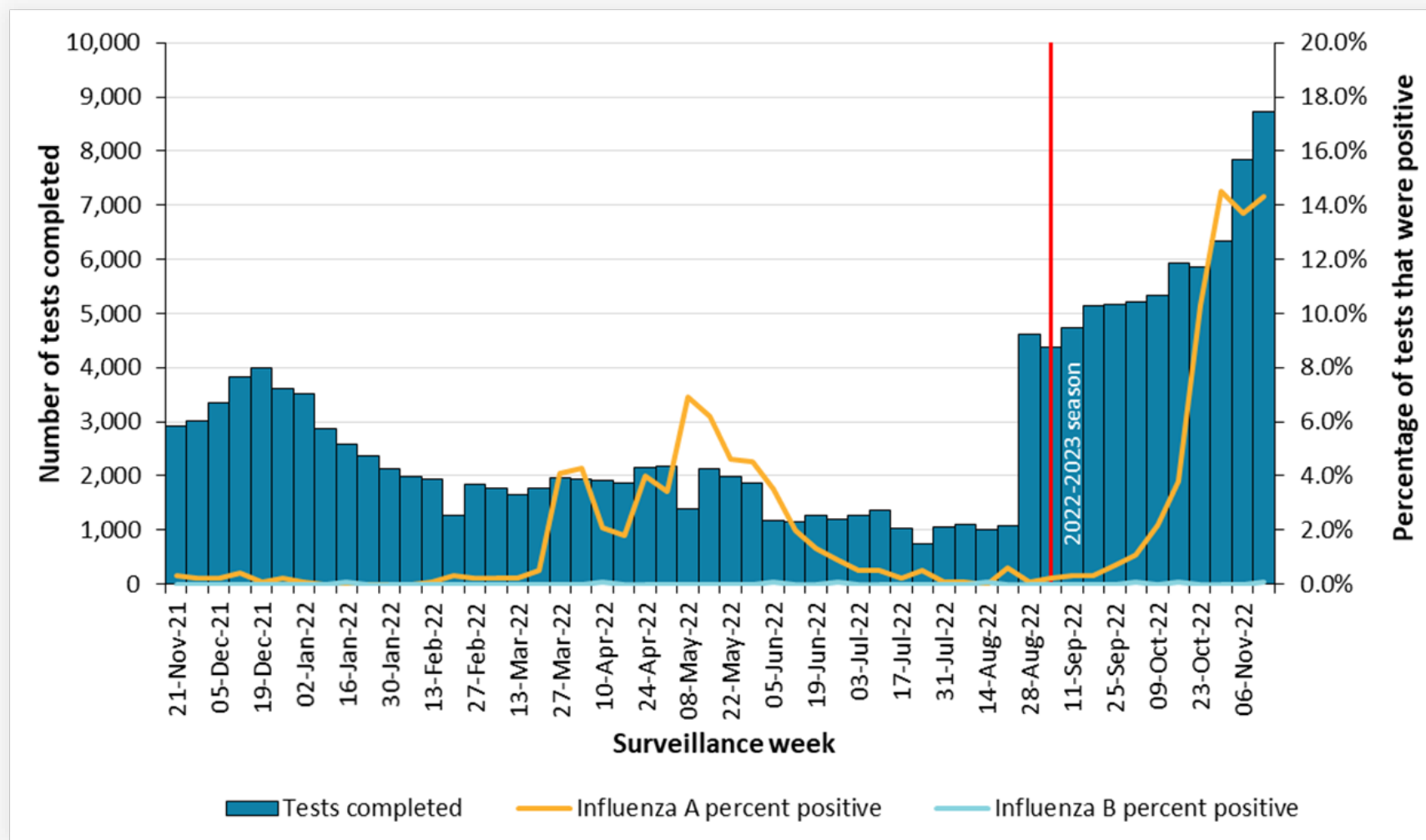


COVID-19 – PERCENT POSITIVITY BY SURVEILLANCE WEEK IN ONTARIO



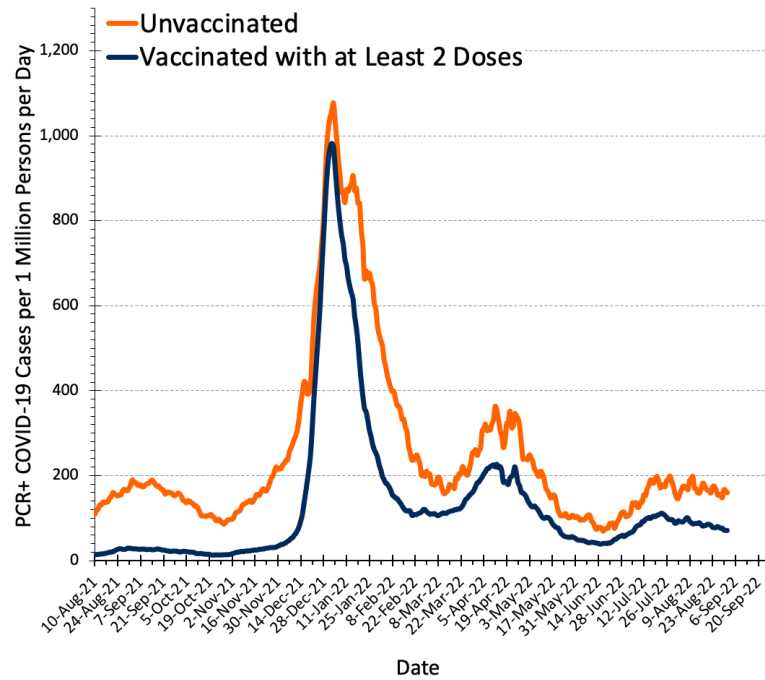
Source: ?

INFLUENZA – PERCENT POSITIVITY BY SURVEILLANCE WEEK IN ONTARIO

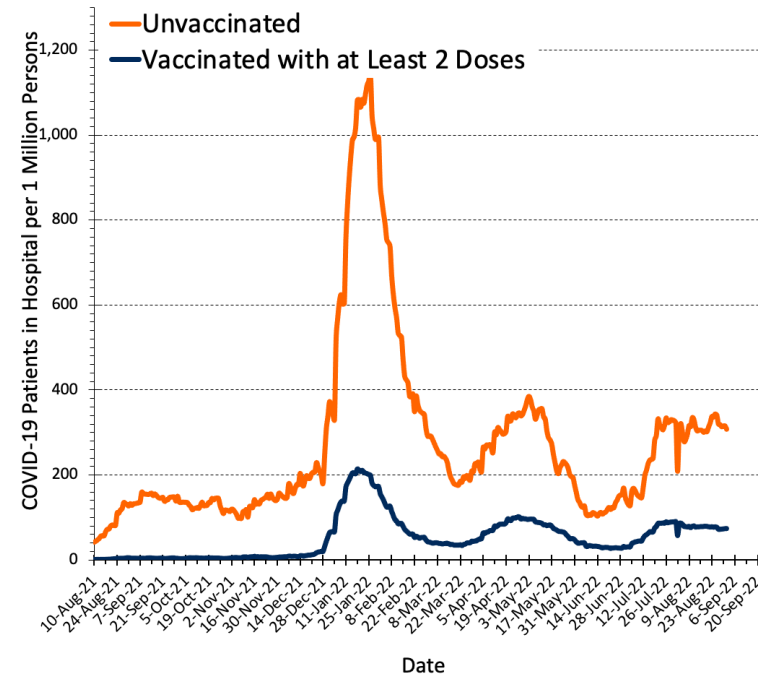


Data source: Public Health Agency of Canada, Centre for Immunization and Respiratory Infectious Diseases

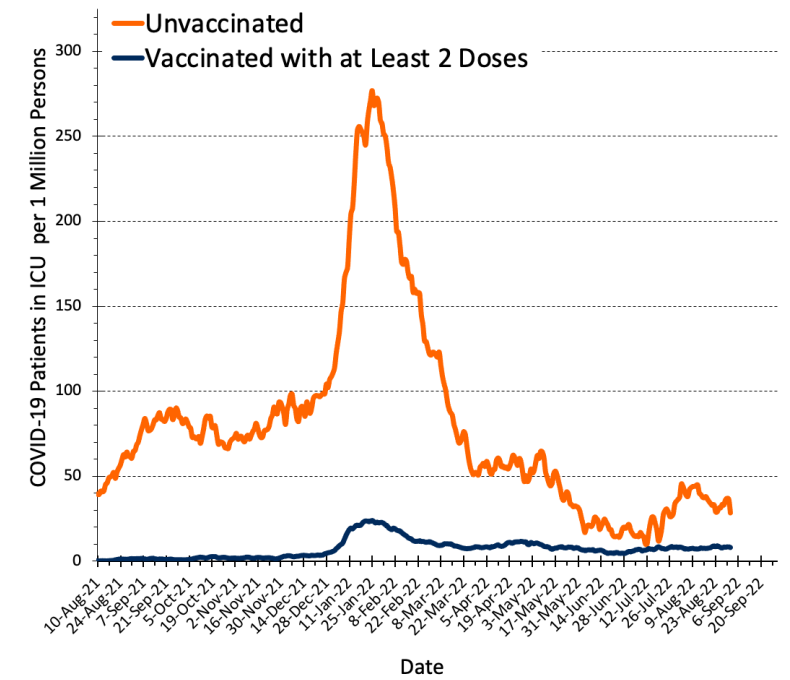
PCR+ COVID-19 Cases



COVID-19 Patients in Hospital



COVID-19 Patients in ICU



LET'S NOT FORGET OUR LAYERS OF PROTECTION

- As we go into the holiday season, it is important that we still remember our layers of protections:
 - ✓ Staying up-to-date with the recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses
 - ✓ Getting the annual flu shot
 - ✓ Staying home if ill
 - ✓ Frequent hand hygiene
 - ✓ Limiting the number of social gathering



REMINDER TO AVOID THE THREE C'S

- The truth is the pandemic is not over
- Here's a reminder to be careful of the three C's to help us and people around us to stay safe:
 - Crowded places
 - Close-contact setting - especially where people have close range conversations (leaning to speak to each other)
 - Confined and enclosed spaces
 - Combination of the 3...

COMMUNAL DINNING/BUFFET

- Communal dining (including buffet and shared meal service) is permitted unless otherwise advised by the local PHU with the following public health measures in place:
- physical distancing and masking protocols
- Frequent hand hygiene is recommended for staff, residents, and visitors.
- We must ensure that residents who are experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 do not participate in communal dining until the resident has tested negative for COVID-19 , is no longer symptomatic and has been cleared from isolation.
- It cannot happen once outbreak is declared



GENERAL IPAC GUIDANCE ON DECORATIONS

- When decorations are being brought out from storage, it should be cleaned before being moved to patient area
- Decorations that are easily cleaned should be selected
- Decorations should be cleanable (not filled with dust/contaminants) even on display
- They are expected to be viewed not touched
- Visibly damaged, old, worn or torn decorations should be discarded



APPROPRIATE DECORATION PLACEMENT

- Ensure fire and safety regulations are followed
- Not to be placed on high-touched areas or regularly cleaned areas such as hand rails
- Not be in nursing station, treatment/procedure/ medication rooms as these areas must be accessible for cleaning and disinfection
- Should not interfere with regular house keeping
- Best in locations out of public reach



APPROPRIATE DECORATION PLACEMENT (CTD)

- At the end of the season :

When decorations are being stored away, it should be cleaned and wiped with hospital grade disinfectant

- perform hand hygiene before and after handling, while taking it down



COSTUMES

- Costumes should not interfere with care
- Flowing gowns may be worn in common places when not providing care
- Costumes must still allow appropriate PPE donning and doffing
- Should not interfere with hand hygiene
- Special character such as Santa Claus visiting homes must :
 - ✓ Be screened
 - ✓ Not enter isolation rooms (instead, can be done virtually)



FOOD SHARING

- Although respiratory virus are not food borne, sharing food is still considered as high risk because it's not possible to wear mask while eating and drinking, and also maintaining physical distancing.
- Hence there must be abundance of caution!!!



FOOD SHARING (CONT.)

- Hand hygiene must be performed before serving and sharing food
- Buffet style gathering should be in spacious places
- Should **not** be done if on enhanced monitoring or outbreak
- Kitchen should be restricted to staff only



CONCLUSION

- Choose your venue
- Keep it small
- Improve ventilation - open windows / use large spaces
- Mask Up
- Make use of technology
- Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccine doses and flu shot



SAFE CHRISTMAS



@TeamRVH



Team RVH



- Although Christmas decorations and celebrations can boost moods during this festive period, we need to be aware of the dangers in order to keep ourselves and people we care for safe as much as we can.
- Thank you



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Team RVH

YULETIDE AND THE PANDEMIC



HAVE A SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON
EVERYONE



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Team RVH

REFERENCES

- https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/epi/2022/11/weekly-epi-summary-covid-ontario-nov-25.pdf?rev=6bbcfa9d7f624c05a5336e5e0d6cb8e0&sc_lang=en
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- <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/system/files/2021-06/CV-19-G0068-IPAC-Recommendations-for-Events-and-Decorations.pdf>

